

# THE Asylum

VOL. 37 NO. 2



SUMMER 2019

*Quarterly Journal of the Numismatic Bibliomania Society • COINBOOKS.ORG*





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extend our sincere thanks  
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the continued success of the  
Numismatic Bibliomania Society.  
We look forward to our shared future.



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# Numismatic Bibliomania Society

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**Submissions:** *The Asylum* (ISSN 1552-1931) is published in four issues per year. Submissions should be sent to the editor at [nbsasylum@gmail.com](mailto:nbsasylum@gmail.com). Authors, please put your name(s) and contact information on all submitted material. All accepted manuscripts become the property of the Numismatic Bibliomania Society. For more information, please contact the editor.

### Sponsorship/Advertising rates

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### Deadlines for Submissions and Advertising:

Spring Issue (No. 1) February 1	Autumn Issue (No. 3) August 17 (After ANA)
Summer Issue (No. 2) May 1	Winter Issue (No. 4) November 1

### NBS 2017–2019 Board of Trustees

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Tom Harrison  
NBS President

## Message from the President

Welcome to this memorable edition of *The Asylum* that celebrates the 40th anniversary of the NBS. This issue provides an opportunity to look back and enjoy memories about many of the personalities, organized events and informal social gatherings from over the past four decades. I would like to share a word of gratitude to our contributing authors and Editor Maria Fanning for bringing our commemorative issue to fruition. Your efforts have made this special anniversary issue truly special.

Planning is underway for our NBS events at this year's ANA World's Fair of Money in Rosemont. I am pleased to announce that the ANS Deputy Director, Gilles Bransbourg, will be speaking at this year's Symposium on Thursday, August 15th at 1:00. In addition, we are delighted to have NBS Vice President Len Augsburger giving a presentation on the first six issues of *The Numismatist*.

On Friday at 11:30 our General Meeting will include the announcement of *The Asylum* author award winners. We are looking forward to Len Augsburger and Wayne Homren reporting on the Newman Numismatic Portal and *The E-Sylum* respectively. The meeting will also feature our annual benefit auction. A special thank you to our generous members who are donating items and our loyal bidders who continue to support the NBS.

Again this year we will be hosting the NBS club table near literature dealers, Charles Davis and Kolbe & Fanning. At the table we will be displaying a variety of items from Friday's benefit auction. Also for a \$25 donation to the NBS, you will receive a commemorative 40th Anniversary coffee mug. We hope everyone will have a chance to stop by the table and share your thoughts and suggestions for the betterment of the NBS.

On behalf of the membership, I would like to offer a heartfelt thank you to our outgoing treasurer, Terry White, for his diligent service to the NBS. Chuck Heck has graciously stepped forward to assume the treasurer's position. We are also indebted to Chuck for taking the reins and securing our new 501(c)(3) tax deductible status. We certainly appreciate both of these members' service to this vital position.

Until we meet in Rosemont, may your numismatic library provide investigation, discovery and most of all, enjoyment.



# To the Editor

To the Editor:

An egg is wonderful for breakfast...but it is terrible when it's on your face! In the last issue of *The Asylum* (Vol. 37, No. 1), I shared a few lines about a painting I found fascinating: The Coin Collector by Hendrick Gerritsz Pot. Dane Nielsen informed me that I made a mistake attributing the painter to be German when he was actually Dutch. I thought "How can this be? And in print too!" So I double-checked and Dane was absolutely correct. If all of you can retrieve the last issue of *The Asylum*, please find my article, locate the first paragraph and cross out "German" and draw in "Dutch," I would appreciate it.

Here is a short biography of Pot taken from Wikipedia: "Pot was born in Amsterdam and spent his early years in Amsterdam and Haarlem. In 1632 he traveled to *London*, where he painted the Royal Family. He lived from 1633 to 1648 in Haarlem, after which he moved to Amsterdam, where he died in 1657. He served as Dean of the *Haarlem Guild of St. Luke* in 1626, 1630 and 1635. He served as the Guild's headman or *Hoofdman* in 1634 and 1648. He died in Amsterdam."

—Ray Williams

To the Editor:

I would like to correct an error I made in my brief article, "The Sheriff and the Switcher: An Afternote," appearing in the Spring 2019 issue (Vol. 37, No. 1) of *The Asylum*. The following sentence appeared in that article: "Just a few years ago, the American Numismatic Association was victimized by one of their museum employees, who made off with several coins, including the ANA's half disme." My co-authors of *1792: Birth of a Nation's Coinage*, Pete Smith and Len Augsburger, quickly reminded me that had I re-read p.195 of our book, I would have remembered that Wyatt Yeager admitted to stealing 338 coins from the ANA and was convicted of theft. The ANA's 1792 half disme was not among those Yeager had purloined, for it had been kept in an ANA safety deposit box along with other high-value coins. A total of 23 such coins, including the half disme, were also missing. A person of interest was suggested by the ANA staff, but to this day no one has been charged with this crime, and the half disme has not been recovered.

—Joel J. Orosz

## NBS's New Charitable Organization Status

We are so grateful to our new NBS treasurer Chuck Heck for making our new 501(c)(3) tax-deductible status possible. All donations to the NBS beyond membership dues are fully tax-deductible.

Chuck can be reached at treasurer@coinbooks.org and at the address below, as well as all membership dues.

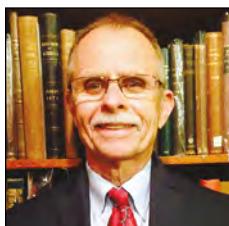
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# NBS 2019 Board of Trustees

## Slate of Candidates

2019 is an election year for the Numismatic Bibliomania Society's Board of Trustees. Please use the ballot that has been enclosed with this issue or vote online at [surveymonkey.com/r/MGDMX23](https://surveymonkey.com/r/MGDMX23) to vote for the NBS members who have volunteered to serve for the 2019–2021 term. Please vote or return ballots by **June 30, 2019**.

### *President*



#### **Tom Harrison, current president**

It has been my privilege to serve as President of the NBS the past two years. I started collecting numismatic literature in the late 1970s when a groundswell of excitement was building for this long neglected branch of numismatics. In 2008, following nearly a twenty year hiatus from the hobby, I returned with a renewed enthusiasm. I look forward to working with the Board and the entire NBS membership as we continue to explore ways to increase enthusiasm and share our passion for numismatic literature with the greater numismatic community.

### *Vice President*



#### **Len Augsburger, current vice president**

Len Augsburger serves as Project Coordinator for the Newman Numismatic Portal at Washington University in St. Louis, and has written widely in the field of American numismatics. He has won two Book of the Year awards from the Numismatic Literary Guild, and recently published, with co-authors Joel Orosz and Pete Smith, *1792: Birth of a Nation's Coinage*. In conjunction with this work, Augsburger cataloged the Donald Partrick collection of patterns of 1792 sold by Heritage Auctions in 2015. A Fellow of the American Numismatic Society, Augsburger also serves as vice president of the Liberty Seated Collectors Club.

### *Secretary/Treasurer*



#### **Chuck Heck, current acting treasurer**

My name is Charles Heck, but everyone knows me as Chuck. My interest in early U.S. history and early U.S. coinage began at age 6. My mom and dad would take my brother and me to Lake George for two weeks every August and I thrived on the local history. At age 8 my dad gave me his boyhood coin collection and that sealed my addiction to numismatics.

I cannot believe how a hobby has enabled me to meet so many

talented, interesting, and friendly people. And now as I get older, I find that the people and the stories mean more to me than the coins. What a great ride this has been!

Professionally, I am a C.P.A., licensed in the State of New York. My areas of specialization are Corporate and Personal Taxation, Non Profit Accounting, and Estates and Trusts. NBS is a 501(c)(3) not for profit corporation that has been determined by the IRS to qualify as a Public Charity. I understand the rules that Public Charities, Private Operating Foundations and Private Non-Operating Foundations must follow. I also know how to prepare and interpret financial information. I know that I can serve NBS well as its Treasurer.

## *Trustees (Vote for Six)*



### **David F. Fanning, *current trustee***

David F. Fanning is a principal of Kolbe & Fanning Numismatic Booksellers, an auction and retail firm located in the Columbus, Ohio area. A student of numismatic literature since childhood, he holds a Ph.D. in English from the Ohio State University and is a life member of the ANA. He is an elected Fellow of the ANS and a Board Member of the Numismatic Bibliomania Society, in addition to being a member of the Rittenhouse Society and a founder of the Attinelli Fellowship. He has published widely on numismatic literature, North American colonial coins, medals, U.S. federal coins, Islamic coins and other topics.



### **Dan Hamelberg, *current trustee***

Dan Hamelberg is a current ANS Trustee, an ANA & ANS Life Member, a Member EAC, FUN, LSCC, C4, Flying Eagle & Indian Cent Collectors Society. He is also a past NBS President and has been a board member for many years, as well as receiving the NBS's George F. Kolbe Award for Lifetime Achievement Numismatic Literature. He has assembled a significant U.S. Coin collection of "First Year of Type" and a comprehensive collection of U.S. Numismatic Literature.

"I would like to see more engagement with young collectors as they are the future of our hobby. The NBS needs and deserves an active board of directors with officers to match to maintain and improve a society devoted to the hobby of Numismatic Literature."



### **David Hill, *current trustee***

David Hill is the Librarian and Archivist at the American Numismatic Society, and he also oversees the satellite operation of the Newman Numismatic Portal that is based there. He has over twenty-five years of experience working with books and archival materials, having held positions at the Columbia University Archives and Columbiana Library, the Berkshire County Historical Society (Massachusetts), the Westchester County Archives, and Iona College Library (New Rochelle, N.Y.). He has been with the ANS since 2010. His numerous

articles on numismatics and numismatic literature have appeared in *ANS Magazine* and *The Asylum*.



**Sydney Martin, current trustee**

I currently serve as President of the American Numismatic Society. I was the editor of the award-winning *Colonial Coin Collectors Club (C4) Newsletter* for over 10 years (retiring in 2016). I believe in the adage “buy the book first,” and have built an extensive numismatic library. My primary collecting interest is in pre-Federal coinage and colonial medals, and I have authored three books dealing with these topics. I am a member of ANS, NBS, MCA, C4, TAMS, EAC, and ANA.



**W. David Perkins, current trustee**

W. David Perkins is a longtime collector and researcher of the early United States silver dollars 1794-1803. Dave also collects Civil War Store Cards, tokens and Numismatic Literature, including books, catalogs and documents pertaining to the great early silver dollar collections and collectors. His interest in Civil War Store Cards started with a discovery that his great-great-grandfather issued two Detroit, Michigan Civil War tokens in 1863.

Dave was a consultant to Bowers & Merena in the cataloging of the Eliasberg early silver dollars and with Heritage Auctions for the Eric P. Newman early quarters and dollars, and has cataloged and consulted on early dollars and other coins and tokens for a number of numismatic auction firms. He has spoken on the early dollars at a number of ANA Numismatic Theatres and has taught a class on the dollars at the ANA Summer Conference. Dave has also been a contributor to a number of numismatic books over the years.

Dave is a past Secretary / Treasurer of NBS. In addition to NBS, Dave is a member of numerous numismatic organizations and clubs including the ANA, ANS, JRCS (LM), NLG, EAC, TAMS, CWTS (LM) and others. Dave is an officer and is Treasurer of the John Reich Collector's Society. He has authored dozens of articles for a wide variety of publications including the *The Asylum*, *John Reich Journal*, *Coin World*, *TAMS Journal*, *Civil War Token Journal*, *The Gobrecht Journal*, *NOW News* and *Talkin' Tokens*. His articles have won literary awards from NLG, JRCS, CWTS, TAMS, NTCA and NOW.



**Dave Steine**

I was born in southeast Minnesota into a family of automobile fanatics and collectors. My father and all five of his brothers had a passion for vintage Cadillacs. By the time I was five years old I was working in my father's hobby shop helping to restore old cars. I became interested in coins when one of my uncles showed me some early gold coins.

My mother would go shopping for fruits and vegetables at a local market and nearby a couple doors down was a little coin shop ran by an elderly

lady. I would ride along with Mom and with my money saved from doing chores and helping with the cars, maybe five bucks a week, I would buy some interesting coins.

Today I live on a class A trout stream in western Wisconsin with my wife Judy and our two golden retrievers, Daisy and Lily. Our two sons Bryon and Ben are grown and work with me in our family business remanufacturing automotive engines and parts. We have close to 100 dedicated employees working at Tri Star Engines and Transmissions, the company I founded over 30 years ago. In addition to collecting coins and numismatic books I also collect Ford and Shelby automobiles and memorabilia.

Please use the enclosed ballot to go online to [surveymonkey.com/r/MGDMX23](https://surveymonkey.com/r/MGDMX23) to vote for NBS officers and trustees. Ballots must be received by **June 30, 2019** to be counted. Mail ballots to:

Maria Fanning  
NBS Election  
141 W. Johnstown Road  
Gahanna OH 43230

## NBS Prepares to Invade Champaign: The Hamelberg Library Tour

Longtime NBSers are no doubt familiar with the 1988 “Invasion of Louisville,” during which a busload of bibliophiles descended upon the Armand Champa residence for a day of fun and fellowship at the Champa library. For this year’s ANA, we are exploring the idea of a similar tour of the Dan Hamelberg library. An online survey has been created to gather feedback from potential visitors: which day would work best, travel arrangements, and so on.

The event would consist of a morning bus ride from Rosemont to Champaign, IL (about 2.5 hours), several hours of absorbing some of the finest numismatic literature in the world, feasting on local Champaign fare, and returning to Rosemont. Scheduling around the ANA is not trivial, and we do not expect consensus on the best time, but, in the interest of making this event accessible to as many as possible, we are gathering input at this early stage.

Please fill out the brief survey at [surveymonkey.com/r/R2BB7HN](https://surveymonkey.com/r/R2BB7HN).



Armand Champa and George Kolbe at the 1988 “Invasion of Louisville”

# Kalamazoo Konclave

By John W. Adams

Most of us take pride in our hospitality. We like to entertain people and derive great pleasure from the enjoyment experienced by our guests. However, we are confident that there is not one among us who would invite four couples into our home for three days, all meals and suitable entertainment provided. We like our friends, but there are limits.

Well, we are bound to report, there are no limits to the hospitality offered by Joel and Florence Orosz. On June 21<sup>st</sup> through June 24<sup>th</sup>, 2018, this dynamic duo invited four fellow bibliophiles and spouses to their home in Kalamazoo, Michigan. Located exactly halfway between Detroit and Chicago, and boasting the headquarters of the Upjohn Company (before it was acquired by Pfizer), Kalamazoo is as mid-western as it gets. It feels warm, open and friendly. It is, in a word, “homey.”

Come June 21<sup>st</sup>, the invitees (John W. Adams, Len Augsburger and Debra Kurtz, David Fanning with Maria as well as son Sam, and George Kolbe) were duly collected from sundry arrival points. The Orosz family dwells in a house that has expanded from modest to typical to generous as four children were born and new space required. The house is located on a cul-de-sac, surrounded by a combination of woodland and lush vegetation, the latter including a fair sampling of poison ivy which, happily, did not become part of our story.

Arriving chez Orosz, one instinctively knows that this is the destination, not a stop along the way. Therefore, we took off our shoes and put up our feet, so to speak. However, it was not long before Florence Upjohn Orosz called us to dinner and, pre-



The illustrious numismatic bibliophiles on display: Len Augsburger, George Kolbe, Joel Orosz, David Fanning and John Adams



(top) Joel Orosz sporting his "book jacket" with John Adams

(right) Florence and Joel Orosz admire the guestbook created as a gift for hosting the group

(bottom) Bibliophiles and families after a great meal



pared entirely by Florence, a sumptuous dinner it was. The ambient atmosphere was intensified by the exclusivity of the guest list and the singular passion –numismatic books – that they shared. Here, gathered in one room, were four certified and certifiable numismatic bibliomaniacs. Dinner and after dinner conversation provided the perfect buffer to the hectic pace of the days to follow.

Actually, the pace of the next morning was not that hectic. Breakfast was appointed for nine so, in order to be sociable, I showed up at eight. No one else showed up at eight; nor at nine; nor at ten; indeed, it was not until eleven that the hosts and the rest of their boarders appeared. Joel went to work cooking a massive amount of bacon, which is an Orosz household staple, and I made Twin Farms pancakes (“Twin Farms” is a Vermont spa that, in return for \$2000 per day, treats you very well. Their pancakes rise and are delightfully fluffy).

After a period of digestion followed by a light lunch, we set off for the Kalamazoo Aviation History Museum or, as it is more fondly known, the “Air Zoo.” If you like airplanes, they got ‘em. Post the Air Zoo, we did some sightseeing and prepared ourselves for the evening meal.

This was no run-of-the-mill evening meal. Florence and Joel had invited 18 of their closest friends, all of whom were curious as to what a numismatic bibliomaniac looked like. If you are wondering why 18, that turns out to be the minimum number of the Orosz inner circle, all of whom regularly dine each other. These Kalamazooers know how to honor friendship. In time, the friends departed for their homes, no doubt wondering what was so special about us and why the Orosz’ made such a fuss. Can’t blame them.

Full day number two began on the same measured timetable as day number one. Once again, several pounds of bacon disappeared into a very large broiler, while Ye Editor concocted his version of Locke Ober scrambled eggs. For the uninitiated, “Locke’s” (now, no more) was for several generations the fanciest restaurant in Boston. Their scrambled eggs was but one of many dishes that made them famous.

The day’s outing featured the Gilmore Car Museum in Hickory Corners – yes, you know, Hickory Corners. If you are into automobiles, this is the place. The Gilmore features over 300 vintage and classic automobiles, with a few motor cycles thrown in.

Which brought us to the moment we were all waiting for – a tour of Joel’s library. Expectantly, we tiptoed down into the bowels of one of the additions to the manse. As we entered the sanctum, a Liebert unit purred melodiously in the background, keeping temperature and humidity in a range ideal for books but less so for we humans. Something like 1400 running feet of shelf space was (mostly) filled with numismatic books, journals, catalogues and price lists, not to mention, as Attinelli would say, the indefinable genus known as “ephemera.”

Joel’s tastes run to what he calls “American Antebellums,” literature emitted prior to the Civil War, especially pieces with association value. Standing out among such esoterica is a run of *The American Museum*, published in the 1790s with abundant numismatic content, this set tracing its origins to the library of George Washington’s nephew, Lawrence. No less impressive is Charles Ira Bushnell’s copy of the June 12–13, 1855 M. Thomas & Sons sale of the John W. Kline collection. Taking pride of place is a copy of Jean-Jacques Barthelmy’s *Voyage du Jeune Anacharsis en Grece*,



(top) Breakfast!

(right) John's Twin Farms pancakes



autographed by its first two owners, Dr. Lewis Roper and Richard Wistar Davids (this is the only item that today can be traced unambiguously to the February 20, 1851 M. Thomas & Sons' sale of Dr. Lewis Roper's numismatic collection). The guests emerged from the sanctum somewhat dazed, but invigorated rather than harmed by the cool, damp air permeating the library.

Even Florence has to step out of the kitchen at some point so, for this particular evening meal, we ate out. I am dead certain that the restaurant was outstanding but, in a long string of culinary highlights, it fails to come to mind. Befitting those present, the conversation was brilliant.

At Sunday breakfast, the chef imported from Boston might have poached the odd egg, but most of us just gaped, as Joel and Florence stoked the broiler with bacon. It is said that the pig population around Kalamazoo is sparse and, if this is true, there is a reason.

Breakfast was followed by the sad necessity of departures. It took brutal resolve to depart from under the umbrella of Orosz hospitality. Re-entry into the real world outside Kalamazoo was painful, but we made it, with life ongoing rendered tolerable only by a treasure chest of fond memories. God bless you, Joel and Florence, you made us happy and fulfilled.



Debra explores a plane at the Air Zoo



# The Bibliophilic Spouse

By Len Augsburger

Not to be ignored among our bibliophilic fellowship are the life partners who shall never know the luxury of empty space, or the ability to navigate one's own residence without running into numismatic literature of one sort or another. Decluttering is elusive, as any excavation reveals only endless strata of periodicals, fixed price lists, and postcards reminding us to submit bids for the 1996 Eliasberg sale. I thought as a tribute to our long-suffering better-halves I might relate an amusing tale of this hobby as told by my wife. She's not writing it, but, as I've heard her recount the legend on multiple occasions, I am sure my recollection will be faithful.

## *The Spouse's Version*

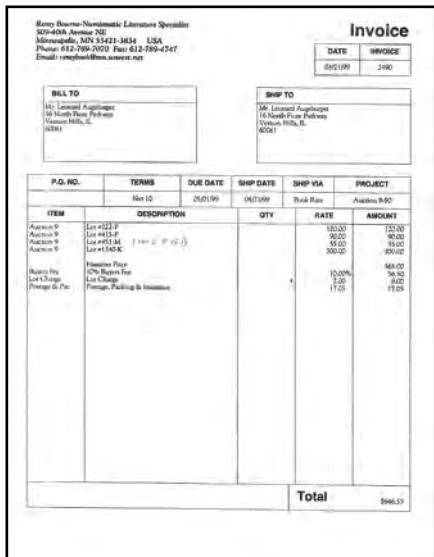
This story takes place in 1999. Remy Bourne was holding his first sale in Chicago, and Len was very excited because he had never attended a numismatic literature auction. Unfortunately, Len had an upper GI scheduled the same day. No matter, said Len, you can take me to the doctor and drop me off at the auction afterwards, and I'll take a taxi home from there. I told him that was a bad idea but he was insistent. Anyway, I drove him to the doctor, and when he finished he was completely incoherent and repeating the same thing over and over about attending the auction. He was under the influence of propofol and versed, the side effects of which include confusion and drowsiness. I can attest to both. But somehow he was not the slightest bit confused about the auction, which he knew was *about to take place* and demanded his presence. I am sure of this, because he asked several times during the drive whether or not I was taking him to the auction. Against my better judgment I dropped my muddled and disheveled beloved at the O'Hare Ramada and went about the rest of my day.

Several weeks later, a steady stream of oversized packages began arriving at our house, all of which contained large invoices. Len claimed he had no recollection of making any of those bids, but, to save face, had to honor all of them. We had trouble making the mortgage payment that month, and I was not pleased.

## *The Bidder's Version, or, in other words, The Truth*

Yes, it is true I attended the Remy Bourne sale in 1999 following a medical procedure, where I was instructed to not make any financial decisions for 24 hours. My recollection, admittedly foggy, is that the narcotics only served to make bidding less aggressive, not more erratic. The record will show my winning bids totaled \$646, and I might add this is considerably less than spent at other Bourne sales in Chicago. In other words, the truth is that *sober* Len spent a lot more than otherwise. For the record, the lots purchased at the sale are listed below, and are merely a bread and butter mix of what I was collecting at the time—Bowersiana, Red Books, and literature related to Liberty Seated coinage.

Lot 222: Bowers' Penn-New York Auction Sale (7/29/1957)



Lot 415: Bowers' *Empire Topics*, nos. 1-6

Lot 451: Kam Ahwash's *Encyclopedia of United States Liberty Seated Dimes*

Lot 1340: "Value box" of Red Books, including vols. 1-12.

Bourne continued his Chicago sales until 2002, and future acquisitions were more compelling, including a complete, hardbound set of Bowers & Merena auction catalogs, and an early run of *The Numismatist*, beginning in 1895. The numismatic literature landscape has changed considerably in the intervening years, and I miss these pre-Internet events that many buyers attended in person, creating opportunities for social interaction that are less common in today's world of online bidding. No matter for my wife, who I'm sure won't let modern technology get in the way of a good story.



# Numismatic Bibliomania Society: Reminiscences for the 40th Anniversary Edition

By Q. David Bowers

Dear Friends,

When I first discovered numismatics in 1952 as a young teenager I immediately set about trying to acquire as many printed references as possible. By 1953 I was a part-time dealer, and by 1954 I was advertising nationally. Each month I would go to the Wilkes-Barre (Pennsylvania) Coin Club, where my interest in periodicals and books became well-known. At the time there was hardly any collecting interest in such, and I was gifted with countless back catalogs—not deluxe editions with photographic plates, but the type of catalogs, including prices realized, that the average collector was able to obtain. I determined that the most interesting periodical, at least to me, was *The Numismatic Scrapbook* magazine, launched in 1935. Before long I had a complete set. Of course, I was a continuing advertiser at the time and received new issues. I also enjoyed *The Numismatist* and was able to get issues back to about 1893, again, mainly as gifts. The *American Journal of Numismatics* was of interest but I received very few in the way of gifts. I contacted the American Numismatic Society in New York City and found they had large quantities of past issues wrapped in brown paper and tied with strings. I was able to get all of what I needed at a very reasonable price. I think the ANS was happy to get rid of them!

With regard to people seriously collecting numismatic periodicals, catalogs, and books, I recall that Eric P. Newman, Ken Bressett, John J. Ford, Jr., and a few friends did this, but interest was not widespread. Frank Katen and George Fuld had such items for sale on a commercial basis now and again. Frank Katen, who used to be a rare coin dealer in Milford, Connecticut, had moved to Washington, D.C. He had been in the public relations business and in his house he had a “power wall” showing him with various political personalities of the era. From Frank I obtained many items to fill in my collection. I set about skimming, and in some instances, reading, back catalogs of B. Max Mehl, Stack's, Numismatic Gallery and others. Numismatic Gallery also put out a newsletter that was always fun to read. About the time I got started, New Netherlands Coin Company started issuing catalogs with detailed descriptions of even ordinary items. Whereas Stack's, Numismatic Gallery and others would devote just a few words to coins unless they were rarities, New Netherlands often gave a paragraph. Much of this was written by Walter Breen and edited by John Ford. By 1954-1955, New Netherlands was in the front row of attention by specialized collectors for the information included in these catalogs. I was friends with both Ford and Breen, and occasionally would help edit galley proofs, as they were called – long printed strips with catalog information. Walter Breen had the habit of abbreviating many things, including common words and often these were made into regular-

length words. Jim Kelly of Dayton, Ohio, put out the *Coins and Chatter* newsletter but it was not particularly interesting. Stack's put out the *Numismatic Review* which often contained research articles.

I learned by reading, and to this day have very good retention of things that I read or scan. This was very helpful to me as when writing articles over the years, I often did not need to do basic research.

In 1961, Margo Russell, editor of *Coin World*, asked me to do a weekly column titled "Numismatic Depth Study." Today, this continues as "The Joy of Collecting," having long ago achieved the status of the longest-running column by any single person in world numismatic history. Margo and her successors at *Coin World* were always very nice to me and still are. There were a few interesting incidents. Once, for Beth Deisher, I reviewed a visit to the Florida United Numismatists convention, saying something like "when I entered the bourse floor I was confronted by predators." Beth wrote back and said this was not a very good way to start a column, and deleted it. In the original form, I talked about the convention then at the very end stated that the predators were in fact Florida wildlife on exhibit at the entrance to the bourse, set up by the state of Florida. In the early days I hand-typed my columns and mailed them in. When I went to Europe I sent them by airmail. I don't believe I ever missed a deadline. Today I hand-type my columns on a keyboard and send them instantly over the internet. Parallel to this and intermittently I have written many articles for other publications, including *The Numismatist* and some under pseudonyms for *Numismatic Scrapbook Magazine*.

After the formation of the Numismatic Bibliomania Society 40 years ago, the collecting of numismatic literature became much more formal, with sophisticated catalogs issued by Charles Davis, George Kolbe, and others. Today, such catalogs are often as interesting as the material they describe.

The development of the Newman Numismatic Portal vastly changed the landscape. Today, it is no longer necessary to build a reference library in order to do research. Nearly all past books and catalogs are on that site, except some modern issues still in copyright or for which the owners do not give permission. I sold my collection of W. Elliott Woodward catalogs, obtained from John Adams, to Charlie Davis some years ago. Today I can go on the internet and *search* for needed items, something that I could not do with hard copies. As a result, many if not most individuals who are using numismatic literature today for research do not collect early books and catalogs but go on the internet. On the other hand, putting together runs and sets as collections is an interesting pursuit. Information about special bindings and plated editions, not generally available decades ago, is now easily found. Such special editions continue to have high values.

Reading is the key to success, combined with hands on experience. Having a numismatic library on hand (mine is still fairly extensive) or using the internet enhances the wide world of numismatics and also contributes to the longevity of interest.



Reprinted from *Numismatic Depth Study*, October 9, 1979:

# Buy the Book Before the Coin

By Q. David Bowers

The late New York dealer Aaron Feldman had a bit of wisdom which he would repeat on frequent occasions, "Buy the book before the coin." Whether Aaron, a fine gentleman who held forth at the Jeweler's Exchange just off New York's Fifth Avenue, was the first person to say this or not, I don't know. But, the advice is certainly sound.

In today's hobby, or perhaps I should say "market" in view of the tremendous amount of outside money that is pouring into numismatics, there is the tendency to dispense with knowledge. Everybody is an expert in an era of rising prices. All you have to have is a copy of *Coin World* for the latest news, a copy of *The Coin Dealer Newsletter* for the latest bid and ask prices, a copy of *The Guide Book of United States Coins* to check mintage figures and prices for less frequently traded coins, and perhaps a subscription to several other numismatic publications as well. Reference books? These are for old fogeys who have the time to read.

And yet there is no substitute for knowledge. In a rising market everyone can be king. In the current best selling book "The Day the Bubble Burst," the story is told of a wise and experienced stock broker who, upon receiving "investment advice from his shoe shine man" decided that this was the time to sell, not to buy, for if everybody in the street was an expert, the market top was certainly near! Well, in coins it seems that everyone is an expert now. Generally rising prices, spurred on by worldwide inflation and the desire to invest in something "hard," have cast a rosy glow upon the coin hobby. I've seen it happen before. Many of you undoubtedly remember the rosy market of 1957, or the one of 1954, or the one of 1974. And, undoubtedly there are some who remember peaks even before my time (my own experience began in 1953 when I first started collecting coins). "Those who have not learned the lessons of history are condemned to repeat them," it has been said. So much for that.

Back to the subject at hand... There is no substitute for knowledge. In up markets, down markets, and sideways markets, the coin buyer who is equipped with an in-depth knowledge of the subject will do well. There are many things to be learned from books. Perhaps the most obvious is that high price sometimes has nothing to do with rarity. When David Akers, of Paramount International Coin Corporation, issued his beautiful reference books on gold coins from the dollar to the half eagle, one of the obvious revelations was that many, many gold coins with exceedingly low sale records or catalogue prices were extreme rarities. Conversely, some of the most famous and most trumpeted rarities were relatively common. It took David Akers hundreds (if not more) of hours of time to ferret out all of this information. Here is an example of a reference book which is useful from a marketing and investment standpoint. Chances are if you are at all interested in the subject covered by the Akers volumes you will literally find them to be worth their weight in gold, the subject discussed!

Among my favorites are books which deal with numismatic history. I feel that cer-

tain books which have nothing at all to do with pricing can be exceedingly valuable from the standpoint of numismatic knowledge. After all, not all knowledge is related to the latest market trends. Take for example the "Early Coins of America," written by Sylvester S. Crosby in 1875. To this day this book stands as a cornerstone in any library worth of the name. Also in a traditional vein is Dr. William H. Sheldon's "Penny Whimsy" book, which provides delightful reading on the subject of large cents of the year 1793-1814. Don Taxay has produced some simply marvelous books over the years, with his superlative "United States Mint and Coinage" being at the top of the list, in my opinion. Whitman Publishing Company does print more than the *Guide Book*, and it would pay you to learn about their other titles.

When I was beginning my interest in coins in the early 1950s I acquired a copy of the Adams-Woodin book on United States patterns. It was a rather obscure reference, not easily found, and it listed no prices. (Today this book has been supplanted by *United States Patterns*, by Dr. J. Hewitt Judd, which does indeed give prices). I read this book from cover to cover. I discovered that certain pieces which were extremely rare could be acquired for nominal values. In one instance I "cherry picked" a pattern coin from a Philadelphia dealer's list at \$25 (the seller was apparently not aware of its rarity), and sold it right after I received it for \$250! This transaction alone paid the cost of the book ten times over!

Talk to anyone who has been in the coin game for just a few years and they probably will not have much in the way of a reference library and, further, will tell you that they don't need one. But, talk to dealers, collectors, successful investors who have been around for more than a decade or two, and they will tell you that they will part with their coins first and their library second!

I encourage you to broaden your horizons and to start on a numismatic library. Here are some ordering suggestions. I might mention that I have no vested interest in any of the firms mentioned, nor would I accept a commission or payment from them if offered. This information is given to you for your use, not for mine. I also might mention that the names I give here are just a sampling of many others which can be found in various numismatic publications. And, don't overlook your local dealer. In fact, you might want to head there first—for you can then "browse" through different books and pick out in person those which appeal to you the most.

Bebee's, Inc., 4514 N. 30<sup>th</sup> Street, Omaha, NE, has always "pushed" numismatic books. They issue a very comprehensive price list. Frank and Laurese Katen, who, by the way, performed the cataloguing for the American Numismatic Association's library, hold auction sales of reference books. Their address is P.O. Box 4047, Colesville Station, Silver Springs, MD 20904.

The Crystal Coin Shop of 349 Main Street, Wakefield, MA 01880 sells by mail a nice list of basic useful references in the United States field.

G. Frederick Kolbe, P.O. Box 178, Santa Ana, CA 92702 is one of the guiding lights in forming a new society of numismatic bibliophiles. George, who recently advertised that his book purchases for 1979 "are already into six figures," has some simply marvelous classic out-of-print volumes. Why not drop him a note to see how you can get on his mailing list?

Steve Eyer, P.O. Box 321, Mt. Zion, IL 62549 distributes a variety of coins relating

to Germany numismatic issues. Sanford J. Durst, 133 East 58<sup>th</sup> Street, New York City, NY 10022, offers a list of over 800 available coin books and suggest that you specify the areas of interest to you and enclose a self-addressed stamped envelope. The venerable firm of B.A. Seaby, Ltd., Audley House, 11 Margaret Street, London W1N 8AT, England offers a beautiful selection of numismatic books particularly rich in world ancient coinage. In the same city Spink & Son, Ltd., King Street, London SW1 also offers many books and invites interested readers to send for a numismatic book list free of charge.

Paul Cunningham, Box 1, Tecumseh, MI 49286, who issues fascinating auction catalogues relating to tokens, medals, and related items (here I do have a vested interest, I have enjoyed business relationships with Mr. Cunningham for a number of years—I am quite enthusiastic about the token field). He offers what he calls the largest selection of token books for sale anywhere. Dozens and dozens and dozens of reference books, some popular and others very obscure, are offered for the numismatist. This source is a real gold mine.

And, in addition to the few sources I just mentioned, there are many dealers who issue catalogues, price lists, auction publications, and other periodicals which are worth subscribing to. Some dealers (Steve Ivy, Stack's, NASCA, Paramount, and First Coinvesters are just a few examples) also publish reference books.

Now that I have discussed buying, it is only fair to look at the “other side of the coin,” so to speak. If you want to sell old numismatic books—particularly scarce volumes with numismatic significance (I don’t imagine he needs guide books or numismatic periodicals of recent years, however), you might contact Armand Champa, who holds forth at P.O. Box 22316, Louisville, KY 40222. Armand Champa, whose collection we sold at auction in 1972, has now become a numismatic book collector par excellence.

Numismatic books are “where it’s at.” Next time you want to spend \$50 or \$100 for a group of coins, don’t. Use this money to start broadening your numismatic library. In the long run the dividends will be really great for you.



## **Editor's Note—**

The following article was first published in the special 100th issue of the *Rare Coin Review*, the house organ of Bowers & Merena Galleries. Much has changed in the 25 years since its publication in 1994, but when Q. David Bowers reached out to us and suggested it might be a good candidate for inclusion in this issue, we had to agree. As a snapshot of a particular era of collecting, it manages to capture the spirit of the time quite well. Editorial changes have been kept to a minimum.

# **The Thrills and Excitement of Collecting Auction Catalogues**

**by Armand Champa**

## *The Challenge of Collecting*

The thrills, excitement, and rewards of collecting numismatic auction catalogues in many ways are the same ones that anyone gets from trying to complete a fine collection of large cents, nickels, dimes, quarters, half dollars, silver dollars, gold, or other coin specialty.

In the same way that large cents, commemoratives, and other coins can be collected by date of issue, you can endeavor to assemble a run of the auction catalogues of Lyman Low, Ed. Frossard, Edward Cogan, the Chapman brothers, W.E. Woodward, Thomas Elder, or another issuer. As with coins, the challenge is to complete the set. For me that meant completing sets of Low, Cogan, Frossard, Chapman, Woodward, and the others.

## *My Early Collecting Days*

As I wrote in "The Pleasures of Book Collecting" for *Rare Coin Review* No. 68 (Spring 1988), I really cannot remember what prompted me to start collecting auction catalogues. I had been buying coins since the mid-1950s.

When I first started collecting catalogues around 1965, I would select them in the same way that I selected coins. I would keep the best-looking ones, and then auction off the rest. I had no idea that a priced or named catalogue, a signed copy, or an annotated copy might be more valuable than a copy in choice condition. How uneducated I was.

In 1966 or 1967 I got a call from a local coin dealer who had a bunch of old auction catalogues for sale and wanted to know if I was interested. The group contained about 75 B. Max Mehl sales, and about 60 copies each of Bolender and Barney Bluestone auctions, and others. Although he wanted a dollar apiece for them, I offered him 50 cents each, and he told me to come down and pick 'em up. The whole deal amounted to about \$100.



Armand Champa and Cal Wilson.

At that time I was collecting pattern coins. I went through each of the Mehl catalogues and noticed that in all of those sales combined, Mehl had not offered more than three specimens of the 1877 pattern half dollars. I was amazed! Equally surprising, among his classic sales: Dunham, Ten Eyck, Granberg, Griffith, Atwater, and Farouk, not one had even a single 1877 pattern half dollar. The Olsen Sale, which is famous for its patterns, only had one of them. After I had found this information, I contacted Bowers and Ruddy Galleries to buy any and all 1877 pattern halves they had. I would never have gotten the thrill of assembling the group of 1877 pattern halves in my collection had it not been for spending \$100 on those auction catalogues.

### *The Hunt Begins*

As usually happens when coin collectors get serious about their collections, they begin to seek reference material about what they are collecting. I was no exception.

Aaron Feldman's famous advice, "Buy the book before the coin!" was and is still true. However, in the mid-1960s, there were no books to buy to help me learn about collecting auction catalogues. Only the most serious numismatic researchers who had gone through the *American Journal of Numismatics* and many of the Elliot Woodward sales had any real knowledge of who issued what catalogues, when, and what was in them.

The only actual reference work about early American numismatic literature, and also auction catalogues of the period, was *Numisgraphics* by E.J. Attinelli, published in 1876 as a chronological, descriptive listing of all of the known catalogues in which coins or medals had been sold through the end of 1875. *Numisgraphics* also included a listing of price lists issued by dealers, and also a listing of various numismatic "publications" which had been published in the United States. However, only about

50 copies of the Attinelli study were published (today, fewer than half of them are known). Because original copies of *Numisgraphics* were, and still are, so scarce and expensive, the average collector just did not have access to a copy.

Even though I had bought a copy of Attinelli (in fact, at one time I owned four copies) I had not yet seriously begun to collect early catalogues. Finally, I got the “Attinelli” bug. The first “Attinelli catalogue” that I bought was in Katen’s Sale 45 (April 29, 1977), lot 1802.

Of the sales listed in Attinelli between 1851 and 1875, I now have 391 of them. I believe that this is probably the largest number in any library. In fact, I am only missing 49 sale catalogues issued between 1855 and 1875. I am especially proud of this group. I even have 39 sales that are priced and named (that means that generally handwritten or occasionally typeset in the margins of each page are the hammer prices for each lot, and also the handwritten name of the buyer for each lot).

I use 1851 as the beginning date because Attinelli considered the Lewis Roper sale, conducted February 20, 1851, by M. Thomas & Son in Philadelphia, to be the first coin sale in America of which numismatists really took note.

## *Attinelli Reprint Spreads Interest*

In 1976, Al Hoch’s Quarterman Publications, Inc. reprinted Attinelli’s 1876 work with a new title, *A Bibliography of American Numismatic Auctions Catalogues 1828–1875*. This reprint also had a new Foreword, and a Rarity and Valuation Guide, each written by John W. Adams. This, then, made Attinelli available to the average collector.

Then in 1982, John Adams came out with *United States Numismatic Literature, Volume I: Nineteenth Century Auction Catalogs*, published by George Kolbe.

I was hooked. Here in one book (later, two) was everything I was looking for: a chronological listing, by dealer, of the catalogues which each of 13 well-known dealers had issued. Information included the number of the sale, the sale date(s), the number of lots in each sale, the names of the major consignors, and a listing of the highlights in each event. Of particular interest to me was John’s listing of the various special editions of sales: plated copies, special sizes of the sales, thick paper editions, etc.

## *An Ambitious Endeavor*

I wanted to try to collect every catalogue Adams listed in his book. Then I got really ambitious. I was also going to try to collect all of the plated sales, thick paper editions, and special editions he listed.

Since then, I have nearly accomplished my goal. Of all of the unplated catalogues listed in Volume I of Adams, I am only missing 21 to be complete. I am especially proud that I am only missing three plated sales listed in Adams, and I think that one of those three may not exist.

For the catalogues of Edouard Frossard, Adams lists 107 thick paper copies; I have 119, 12 more than Adams lists. You can imagine the excitement of finding a special version of a sale that has not been listed anywhere before!

Then, about 1985, Martin Gengerke issued his first edition of *American Numismatic Auctions*, a listing by dealer of every known numismatic auction catalogue

ever issued in the United States. Now in its eighth edition, over 13,000 catalogues are listed. For the first time there was a one-volume reference for the catalogue collector.

Next, in 1990, John Adams's second volume about 20th-century catalogues was published. This gave me another group of catalogues to complete. In this volume, Adams listed 16 major cataloguers of 20th-century auction catalogues of the era prior to 1950. Based on Adams's listings, I have completed 11 of the 16: Bolender, Bluestone, Kosoff, Kagin, Katen, Mehl, Morgenthau, New Netherlands, Schulman, and Stack's. I am missing only the first Federal Coin Exchange sale, but I have a Federal catalogue that is unlisted and predates the first sale which John lists.

One of my favorite books, published only a short time ago, is *American Numismatic Literature* by Charles Davis. This volume encompasses all American numismatic literature, not merely auction catalogues, includes listings of the appearances of many important catalogues, the prices they brought at various auctions, important information about the sales, and much other useful data usually unavailable elsewhere.

## *The Ultimate “Catalogue”*

One of the great challenges that I still have is getting a copy of the legendary Benjamin Watkins sale held in Salem, Massachusetts, on June 12, 1828. For more than a century this was considered to be the first auction sale to be held in the United States which contained numismatic material. The “catalogue” was actually a broadside, a sheet of paper about 18 inches high, printed on one side. Although several other sales have since been found that took place before Watkins, this is still the “Holy Grail” for catalogue collectors.

The Watkins catalogue was considered an extreme rarity, even in Attinelli's day. In Attinelli's own auction catalogue of January 8, 1878, conducted at Bangs & Co., he offered a reprint of the Watkins sale. About that copy, Attinelli wrote, “The 1828 Watkins Collection is a photolithograph the same size as the original. 30 [copies] were made of the original. Two copies are known—one being imperfect.”

I have never been able to obtain an original or even one of those lithographic copies of the Watkins sale despite my having advertised widely for a copy for more than 20 years. So not even time, money, and/or a great deal of effort will guarantee you success. There is always something out there to tease you.

These are just a few of the reasons that I find so many thrills and such excitement in collecting United States numismatic auction catalogues.

Once you get started, I'll bet that you can and will find many more reasons. And, maybe you even will find a copy of the Watkins sale. If so, I will be first in a long line of admirers to congratulate you!



# *The Asylum: The First Ten Volumes*

By David F. Fanning

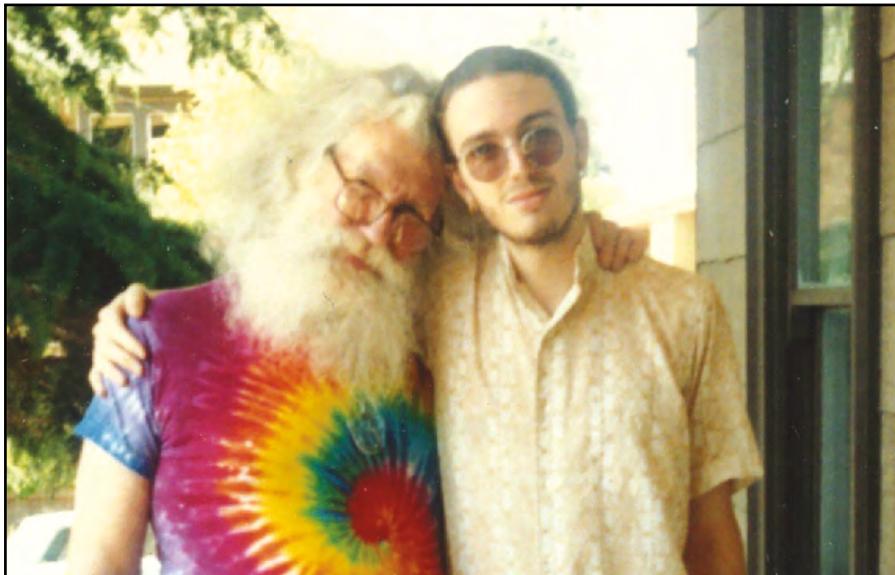
As we celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Numismatic Bibliomania Society, I thought it might be fun to sit down with my set of *The Asylum* and take a look at all that had appeared in its pages during that time. As it quickly became apparent that I didn't have the time to review several thousand pages of bibliomaniacal commentary, nor did this special issue have need of a 60-page article on the subject of itself, I quickly whittled the topic down to the first ten years — or volumes, at least.

What I want to focus on here are those articles appearing in the first ten volumes of *The Asylum* that are especially useful to the reader. Our early years were at times a bit chaotic, with various controversies generating heated discussion, but not always learned discourse. These editorial battles tend to get a lot of attention when discussing the organization's somewhat wayward youth, but they detract from the fact that the NBS managed to publish a number of genuinely informative and thought-provoking articles during that period that are well worth revisiting. Some have been surpassed by later works, but were significant at the time, while others maintain their importance to this day.

The publication began well. Our first volume was all of 72 pages long, but a roster of authors includes John W. Adams, Q. David Bowers, George F. Kolbe, Jack Collins, John J. Ford, Jr., and Walter H. Breen. Not too shabby a start. The first issue featured "Photographic Illustrations in Numismatic Literature," by NBS co-founder Kolbe. This article is genuinely useful, and I daresay its clear explanation of the differences between heliotypes and autotypes, photogravures and collotypes, was welcome to many then just as it can be read with profit today.

The late Bob Wester made his first appearance in the pages of *The Asylum* in Volume II, No. 1, with an informative article on the family of Sylvester S. Crosby. The same issue featured an article by Eric P. Newman on the plate processes used in Crosby's masterpiece *The Early Coins of America*, and an article by Kirby Brown on the embossed coin plates found in Heath's *American Bond Detector*. All three are articles I've had reason to consult in just the last few years — a pretty good batting average for a single issue. Wayne Homren and Joel J. Orosz both made their debut in this second volume, with Orosz beginning a series on the care and preservation of old books.

I was lucky enough to start collecting numismatic literature in the 1980s, and it was an exciting era in which to begin. New discoveries were being made all the time and what may now seem like very basic questions were still seeking answers. That air of novelty and exploration is reflected in the pages of *The Asylum* during these early years. That said, the organization itself experienced considerable growing pains that frequently affected *The Asylum*'s publication schedule. More than a year went by between Vol. II, No. 2 and Vol. II, No. 3, for instance, and the typography and layout of the publication changed radically from time to time. The content remained strong, though, appealing to a range of interests in what can at first glance appear to be a very narrow field.



Walter Breen and David Fanning on August 13, 1990 (David's 19th birthday) at Walter's house in Berkeley, California.

Photo by Mark Flanigan

Cal Wilson and Michael Sullivan published articles in back-to-back issues trying to delineate the early ANA sales. Both were groundbreaking articles, though neither identified Ben Green's September 3, 1907 sale as an ANA sale (it is now regarded as being the first of the series). The Spring 1985 issue (Vol. III, No. 1) included George Kolbe's review of the recently published *Numismatic Bibliography* by Smithsonian curator Elvira Clain-Stefanelli. It is hard to even imagine the field of numismatic literature existing without this volume, which, despite its numerous shortcomings, remains to this day to most comprehensive work of its kind.

David Block contributed a significant overview of books on Napoleonic medals to the Summer 1985 issue, expanding *The Asylum's* coverage of non-American material. Alan Meghrig contributed the first index of *The Asylum* to this same issue, which also included a membership roster. The list of nearly 200 names includes those of many friends who are no longer with us, but on the other hand it includes a heartening number of members who remain active 34 years later.

The Fall and Winter 1985 issues were a combined double issue, as were the Spring and Summer 1986 issues. Making up for this obvious attempt to catch up on *The Asylum's* wayward production schedule are two articles by Carling Gresham on José Toribio Medina (1852–1930), the brilliant Chilean historian and bibliographer whose contributions to Latin American numismatics have won him the esteem of several generations of researchers. These articles are well worth rereading, and although Gresham's estimates of the number of surviving copies are no longer precisely accurate, they remain generally useful in establishing relative rarity.

Remy Bourne contributed an "Overview of Obscure Numismatic Periodicals" to the Autumn 1986 issue. Bourne made real contributions to the study of American

numismatic literature in the areas of fixed price lists, periodicals and house organs, and he was at his best on these topics. Bob Wester continued to dig up interesting historical tidbits, presenting readers with a photograph of the Rev. Edmund F. Slafter, author of the first focused work on the coinage of Vermont, in the Winter 1986 issue. Ran Zander wrote a short piece for the same issue on Sidney Eastwood's excellent but little-known periodical *Numisma*, published in seven issues over a period of almost a decade and nearly forgotten today.

As infancy morphed into childhood, *The Asylum* began to stand more steadily on its feet. Volume V saw articles by Q. David Bowers (reminiscences of the 1950s), George F. Kolbe (a three-part article on "The Fascinating World of Numismatic Literature"), and P. Scott Rubin (who finally identified in print for the first time the 1907 ANA sale held by Ben Green mentioned earlier). Volume VI welcomed colonial specialist Jeff Rock, who contributed a well-written two-part article on "Books on Copper Worth Their Weight in Gold." This 1988 volume also included more material on foreign numismatic literature than was usual at this time: Ran Zander's description of the Gennadi Vasilievich Yudin library, now housed as part of the Library of Congress; Reinhold Jordan on East German numismatic miniature books; and David Block's well-done essay on the important journal *Das Notgeld*.

Pete Smith reviewed 19th-century fixed price lists and their coverage of early American copper coins for the Spring 1989 issue, drawing attention to the potential research utility of these oft-ignored cousins of auction catalogues. Ken Lowe attempted a census of sets of the first six volumes of *The Numismatist* in the same issue. While articles on both of these subjects could easily find their way into the pages of *The Asylum* today, one difference between now and then is apparent: this 32-page issue (counting the covers) included ten and a half pages of advertising.

Elizabeth M. Nuxoll contributed a very useful article to the Summer 1989 issue on numismatic material to be found in *The Papers of Robert Morris*, the nine-volume project of which she was the director. The Winter 1989 issue was also a keeper, featuring a transcription of a talk by Frank Katen on the Wylie hoard of American numismatic auction catalogues, an attempt by R.L. Bisordi to list the myriad publications of paper money specialist John Muscalus, and a fun discussion by Joel Orosz of Robert Bilinski's foundational 1957 *A Guide to Coin Investment*. A thorough overview of Wayte Raymond's many contributions to American numismatics appeared in the Spring 1990 issue, written by none other than current NBS President Tom Harrison.

Italian numismatics made an appearance in *The Asylum* with an article on Ercole Gnechi written by Alfred Szego for the Summer 1990 issue. The same issue included the late John Bergman's classic "How to Pack Books." This article should be consulted by anyone preparing to send books through the mail or by freight. As a bookseller, I can't count how many times I've received a book that was damaged through insufficient packing, in many cases resulting in my deducting \$50, \$100, or even \$500 from my offer because the sender wished to save \$3 by packing their books in a used box or by using wadded newspaper instead of bubble-wrap. In the "Two Classic Articles for the Price of One Department," the Summer 1990 issue also included Joel Orosz's first Shammy Awards, presented to "those whose superb disregard of credulity goes beyond mere hype and into the rarified realm of wretched excess." An important

*addendum et corrigendum* to Adams Volume One appeared in the Autumn 1990 *Asylum*, which also included the first part of Jeff Rock's two-part "Books about U.S. Silver and Gold Coins Prior to 1837 and Pioneer and Territorial Gold."

Every now and then the stars align just so and we lucky NBS members are presented with a truly exceptional issue of *The Asylum*. The ANA Centennial issue, published as Vol. IX, No. 3, was one such issue. John Bergman contributed an overview article on the April 1991 Peus auction of the Adolph Hess Library, one of the most important auctions of numismatic books ever held. Charlie Davis contributed a "Trial List of Quarterman Publications," applauding the efforts of Al Hoch to make available titles that would often be beyond the means of the reader while maintaining high production values. While Davis's article was restricted to titles on American numismatics, it is an eye-opening reminder of just how much Hoch contributed to the hobby through his efforts. (Davis was also serving as editor of *The Asylum* at this time, so he deserves double credit for this issue.) Scott Rubin wrote on "The Most Important A.N.A. Auctions of Each Decade," providing detailed discussion for each of his decisions in a highly interesting article. As if this weren't enough, Wayne Homren wrote on the prices charged in the 19th century for hand-priced auction catalogues.

In terms of utility, Pete Smith's trial listing of editions, printings, and random variations of A.M. Smith's *Coins and Coinage*, published in the Fall 1991 issue of *The Asylum*, is one I've had reason to consult from time to time. The same issue included Editor Davis's write-up of the bibliophilic highlight of the 1991 ANA Convention: the 47-case exhibit of highlights from the Armand Champa Library, presented with an accompanying descriptive catalogue written by George F. Kolbe. In these two articles, we see the dual purpose of *The Asylum*: to disseminate knowledge and to record the milestones of our area of the hobby.

Our tenth volume began with a fascinating article on W. Elliot Woodward, once again the work of *Asylum* Editor Charles Davis. In "W. Elliot Woodward, a Few Notes and New Plates," Davis brought Woodward to life with new biographical information and bibliographical data. Davis traced Woodward's life from his upbringing in Maine to the establishment of his apothecary shop in Roxbury, an area of the Boston area that Woodward played a key role in developing—as obvious still today by the streets named after him and his sons. Woodward's extraordinary library of rare Americana, sold at Leavitt's in April 1869 in what was among the most important American book auctions of the century, was first brought to widespread attention in numismatic circles by Davis's article, which also discussed other sales involving Woodward of which we should be aware. Finally, a previously unknown set of photographic plates—prepared for the third part of Woodward's Vicksburg sales—received their first public attention in Davis's article.

The same issue included a very useful and interesting article by longtime NBS member Dave Hirt, who provided a listing of numismatic titles to be found in the massive 1864 auction of the John Allan library, along with the prices realized and the buyer of each item.

The quality of the content didn't slip for the remainder of the volume, with Michael Hodder starting off the Spring 1992 issue with a detailed examination of a set of annotated photocopy drafts of New Netherland Coin Company's 60th sale, primarily

written by John J. Ford and augmented with notes by Walter Breen. This is the sale John W. Adams famously claimed was “a strong candidate for best executed catalogue ever,” so its genesis and composition process is of more than passing interest. Also of sustained interest is P. Scott Rubin’s article on “The Printing History of the Gilbert Half Cent Book,” published in the same issue. Scott’s article is one I have annotated and returned to more than once over the years, and it settled a number of questions concerning this bibliographically puzzling volume.

The Summer 1992 issue may appear at first glance to be the Eric P. Newman Issue, as it is graced not only with an important article by him but with an enjoyable piece about him and his library. “The Earliest American Publications on Numismatics: A Rediscovery” shed light on what had been largely forgotten foundational works on American medals and coins by James Mease and J. Francis Fisher. These substantive articles have become recognized in the last twenty-some years as being exceptionally important and they are appreciated for the quality of their content in addition to their landmark status. The same issue reported on a public gathering of numismatic bibliophiles at Newman’s St. Louis library, held in conjunction with the Early American Coppers club meeting being held in that city. Written by Wayne Homren (long before the *E-Sylum* had become an NBS staple), the casually written report provides a candid look at some of those in attendance and a downright reverential description of rarities including Denis Mendelson’s 1881 Andrews and Eric Newman’s 1870 Maris.

The final issue of our first ten volumes maintained a high level of content, with articles by John J. Ford, Jr. and Michael J. Sullivan, an auction report by editor Charles Davis, the latest installment of Joel Orosz’s “Printer’s Devil” column, and an ANA diary by the late John Burns. There’s even a photo of John Kraljevich and Rian Thum, both of whom appear to be about six, holding a World Series of Numismatics trophy not much smaller than themselves. Ford’s article is on Frances Gardiner Davenport’s useful *European Treaties Bearing on the History of the United States and Its Dependencies to 1648*. This three-volume work provides an extraordinary amount of background information to anyone studying the series known as Betts Medals. Sullivan’s article is on Henry Bronson, the Connecticut physician remembered today by some as being a pioneer in the study of early American paper money and the author of *A Historical Account of Connecticut Currency, Continental Money, and Finances of the Revolution* (1865). Orosz’s column focuses on the early American coin dealer John K. Curtis and is a good example of the wonderful work this Kalamazoo researcher has published over the years in *The Asylum*.

The first ten volumes of *The Asylum* included original work by at least sixty authors, many of whom contributed multiple articles to the publication in the thirteen years our fledgling organization took to issue ten volumes. They also included a variety of interesting reprints, most of which were unknown to the vast majority of readers. *The Asylum* proved that the NBS served a distinct purpose and (despite some occasional stumbles) served it well. It introduced itself, it promoted the organization, it riled people up, it generated excitement, it stirred up controversy and occasionally apologized, it informed, it opined, and it mattered. The NBS was here to stay.



# Bibliomania—Or, Literature For Its Own Sake

By David D. Gladfelter

It seems to me, upon looking back over the last 40 years as a charter member of this organization, that one of our major accomplishments has been creating a perception of numismatic literature not only as a reference tool, but also as a thing of value in its own right.

Understand, I don't mean to slight NBS's role in providing a forum for information about numismatic literature, directly through this periodical and indirectly through Wayne Homren's *E-Sylum*. Of course our role is that, and more.

Take an example: I've always preferred hardcover versions of books because they stand up better than softcovers to the wear and tear of frequent use. To me, in pre-NBS days, fancy limited editions were nothing but an unjustified added expense; I guess you would have called me one of Joel Orosz's

“Lawrenceville” types.<sup>1</sup> But then a funny thing happened: a book described by the auctioneer as an ordinary hardcover proved to be, upon purchase, a “deluxe edition, Number IX of XV”<sup>2</sup>. It has a full leather binding, five raised bands and gilt filigree and ornamentation—just the most fun to use. This book has now been supplanted by a greatly expanded work,<sup>3</sup> but don't think for a minute that deluxe “Number IX” is going anywhere. Because it is worth keeping as a thing of value in its own right (figure 1).

Creeping Louisvilleism? Whoever said one couldn't live in both towns, couldn't have dual citizenship in both worlds?

I also display the Louisville side of my personality by “collecting people as well as books.” Whenever possible, I try to prevail upon authors to inscribe their books

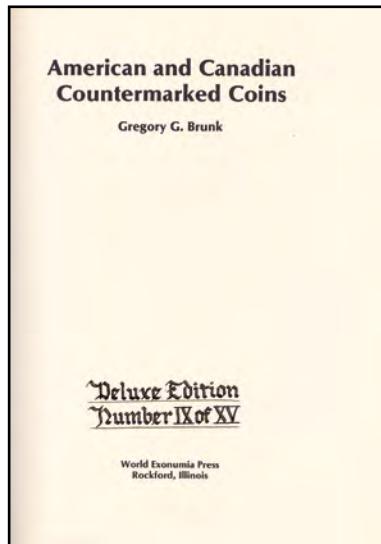


Figure 1

1 “Lawrenceville or Louisville?” *The Asylum* 34(3):13 (Autumn 2016). The article describes polar opposites in literature collectors, one living in Lawrenceville, NJ, whose library is used for research and writing, the other being the late Armand Champa, of Louisville, KY, who focused on books as objets d'art.

2 Gregory G. Brunk, *American and Canadian Countermarked Coins* (Rockford, IL: World Exonumia Press, 1987).

3 Gregory G. Brunk, *Merchant and Privately Countermarked Coins: Advertising on the World's Smallest Billboards* (Rockford, IL: World Exonumia Press, 2003).

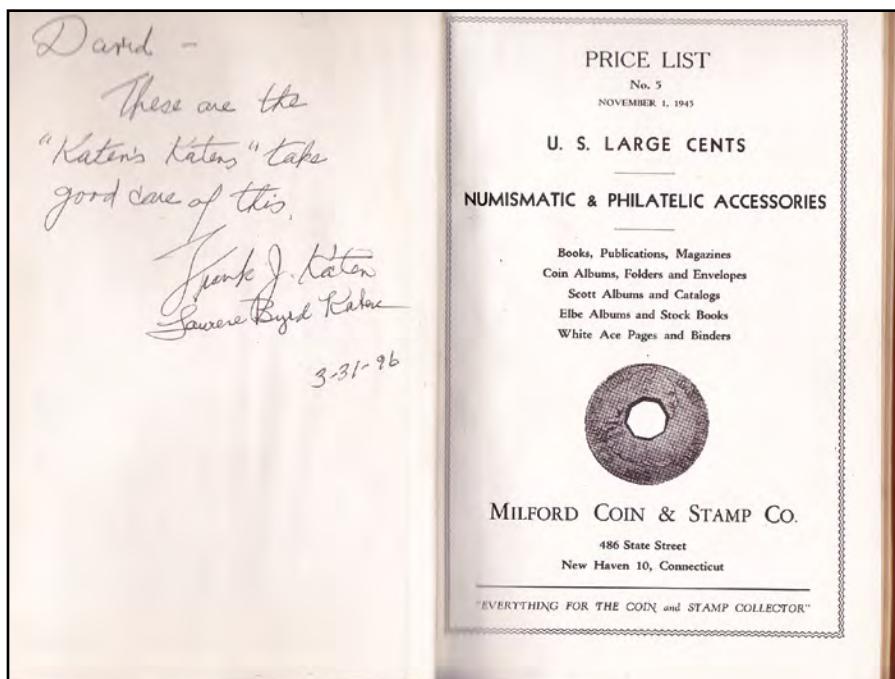


Figure 3

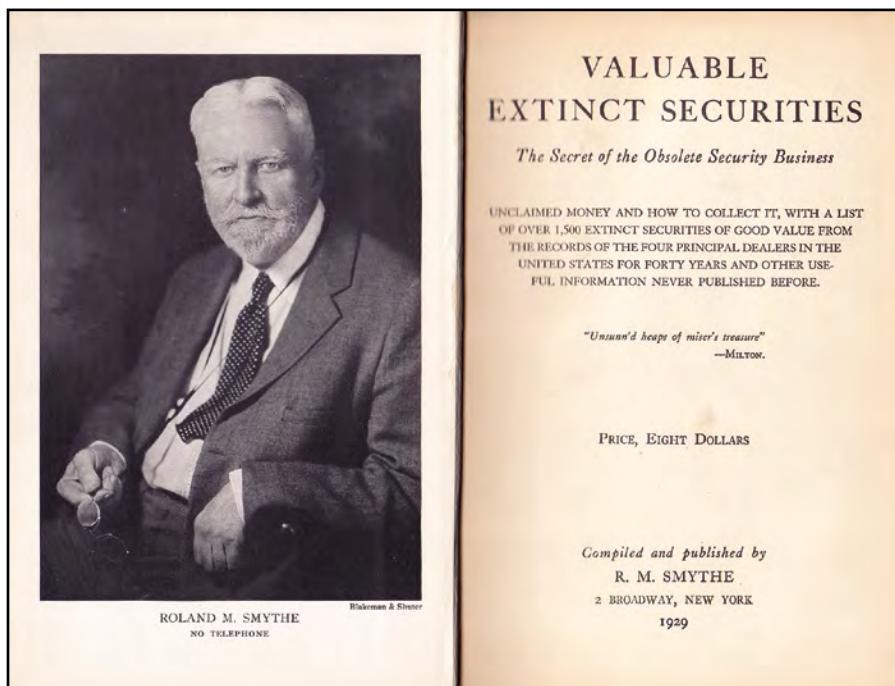


Figure 4

to me. The one time that I met Eric P. Newman in person was just such an occasion—I shamelessly buttonholed him at an ANA convention after one of his Numismatic Theater talks, requested, and obtained his signature on my copy of the ANA centennial anthology to which he was a contributor.<sup>4</sup> John W. Adams, another contributor who signed for me, wished me luck with completing the signature-gathering project. As a result, my copy of the anthology is both a useful tool and, thanks to its signatures, a treasure in its own right (figure 2).

I remember having made an unsuccessful signature solicitation to Harry X. Boosel, his book in hand, as he was entering the banquet room with his wife at another ANA convention. He responded rather testily and I apologized for bothering him. I have since learned

When Frank and Laurese Katen auctioned their library in 1996 at the close of their long career as literature dealers, their inscription on their own bound set of catalogs (figure 3) cautioned me to "take good care" of the set. I have done so.

A number of my books have authors' inscriptions to prior owners. One example is a 1929 book by Roland M. Smythe<sup>5</sup>, who claimed for some reason to eschew the telephone (figure 4). He wished his reader a "Merrie Christmas" (figure 5). And so on.

I can't resist sharing Walter Breen's inscription on my copy of his "complete encyclopedia"<sup>6</sup>. When the book came out in 1988 he was selling and signing copies to a long line of purchasers at the Garden State Numismatic Association convention. When I gave him my name, he added to his inscription a reference to two pages in the book (figure 6). They concerned an article by me of which he had made the briefest of use.

Finally, I show you a “short snorter”<sup>7</sup> that is one of two created and auctioned off

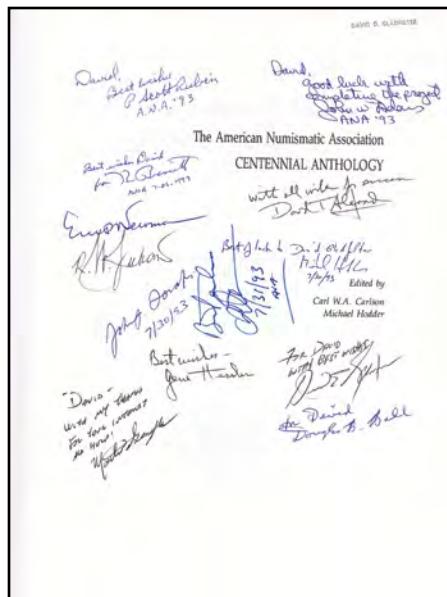


Figure 2

<sup>4</sup> *The American Numismatic Association Centennial Anthology*, Carl W. A. Carlson and Michael Hodder, eds. (Colorado Springs, CO: American Numismatic Association, 1991).

5 *Valuable Extinct Securities: The Secret of the Obsolete Security Business* (New York: R. M. Smythe, 1929).

6 Walter Breen's *Complete Encyclopedia of U. S. and Colonial Coins* (New York et al.: Doubleday, 1988).

7 "A short snorter" is a banknote which was signed by various persons traveling together or meeting up at different events and records who was present. The tradition was started by bush pilots in Alaska in the 1920s and subsequently spread through the growth of military

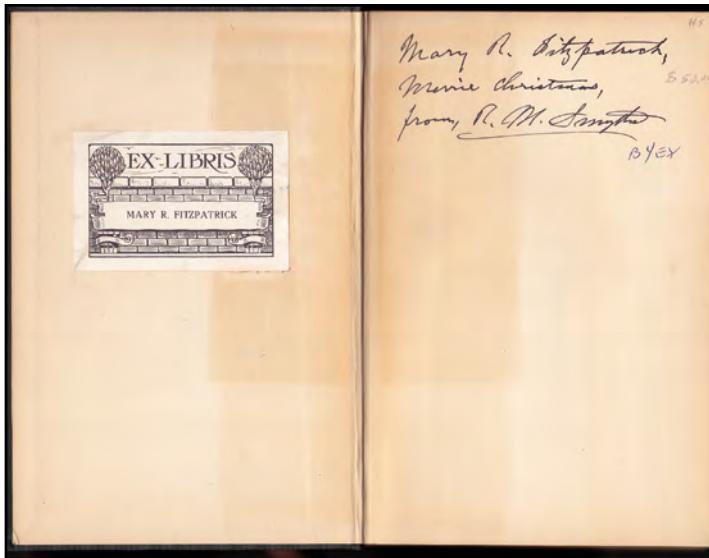


Figure 5

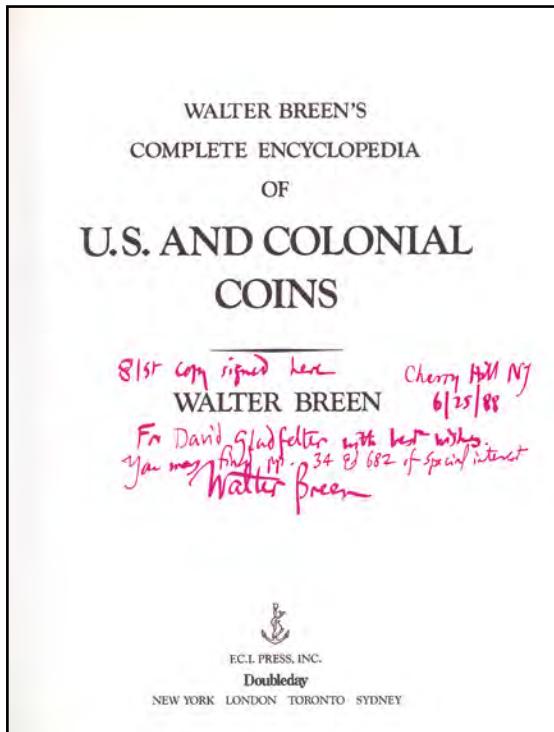


Figure 6

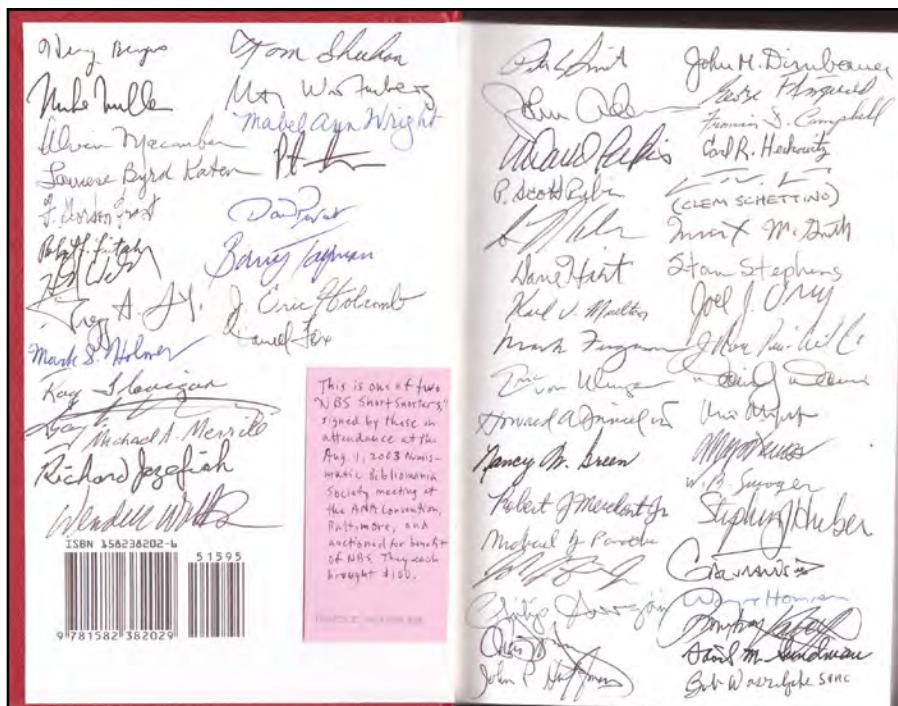


Figure 7

for the benefit of NBS at our 2003 meeting at the ANA convention in Baltimore. It is a 57th edition “Red Book”<sup>8</sup> signed by all in attendance (figure 7; my signature is between those of David J. Davis and Myron Xenos). I believe, but at this late date cannot be 100% certain, that this was the same meeting at which Stand-Up Auctioneer Brad Karoleff had John Adams diving under the table for cover as Brad wickedly recognized both bids and non-bids on a particularly choice and expensive lot. My item cost \$100 and believe me, it’s worth every penny.



and commercial aviation.” *The Short Snorter Project*, [www.shortsnorter.org](http://www.shortsnorter.org) (accessed February 24, 2019).

8 R. S. Yeoman, *A Guide Book of United States Coins*, 57<sup>th</sup> Edition, Kenneth Bressett, ed. (Atlanta: Whitman Publishing, LLC, 2003).

# My Two Cents Worth

By Dan Hamelberg

My numismatic addiction started with two cents: an 1865 two-cent piece.

It was 1959. Growing up in a small town north of Chicago, I was a confirmed Cubs fan. I played little league baseball for a local team called the Cubs. I played shortstop, batted clean up, and displayed number 14 on my jersey. Ernie Banks was my hero. My dad was a White Sox fan. A great year for the Sox. To preserve my right to attend Cubs games, I needed to accompany my dad to Comiskey Park occasionally. That day the Sox were hosting the Yankees. I was looking forward to seeing Mickey Mantle and Whitey Ford. A friend of my dad sat with us for the game.

I did not catch a foul ball that day, but after the game my Dad's friend gave me an old coin he brought along. It was a U.S. 1865 two-cent piece. I had no idea the U.S. made two-cent pieces! The next day, I paid a visit to the local book store and purchased my first Red Book. My 1865 two-cent piece looked about Fine, and was worth about three dollars. I looked at the Lincoln cents section in the Red Book and thought it might be fun to put together a collection.

I bought a blue Whitman folder for Lincoln cents and I was hooked. It was great hunting for cents that were worth more than face value, and trying to complete the collection was a great challenge. I had a friend who also started collecting coins at that time. His dad was a doctor, and had a collection of U.S. gold and large cents. He allowed us to view the collection from time to time and the hook was set deeper. I would go to the local bank with my Whitman folder and get a roll of cents from the teller, and would spread the folder out on a bank counter and go through the roll of cents. I started filling holes, I would replace the cents taken from the roll and return to the teller window for another roll of cents, and would keep doing this until they asked me to leave. From time to time my friend and I would do the bank searching together.

To advance our hobby, our parents would get us boxes of cents occasionally to look through. This was a great treasure hunt! The only Lincoln cent that alluded me was the 1955 double die. I found several 1909 S VDBs and a few 1914 Ds in circulation. All my searching paid off the day I found a 1922 plain. I would take my duplicates to a local coin shop and trade them for cash. Then, once in a while, one of our parents would take us into Chicago to the coin store in Marshall Fields. There I would use my cash to buy U.S. gold coins since I couldn't find gold coins in circulation. I also collected buffalo nickels and mercury dimes, but did not complete the collections. I spent many happy hours going through the Red Book looking at the values of my collection, and learning more about all the various issues of U.S. coins. I sent away for price lists from various dealers including Littleton. Coin collecting was a great adventure!

Then came high school. You know the story—it was baseball, a drivers license, a car, and girls. Then came college and the University of Illinois at Champaign—it was baseball, a car, girls, and beer. Unfortunately, I sold some of my gold coins to finance my college career. So the story continues. After college comes marriage, a



Dan Hamelberg and David Sundman at the 2011 NBS Annual Meeting.

family, a business, and then, finally, some disposable income. The seeds of coin collecting started to germinate. I now had the opportunity to start collecting coins again. The hobby returned with a vengeance. I could buy rare U.S. coins that I could never find in circulation. I decided to focus on a U.S. type set of first year of issues from the Philadelphia Mint, and started receiving auction catalogs and attending sales. Over the years I got to know Dave Bowers, the Stacks, Steve Ivy, and the Goldbergs as I assembled my collection. Along the way I met a respected coin dealer, Bill Nagle, and we became good friends as he guided me and advised many of my purchases.

I would study the price guides and search out old auction catalogs so I could do my homework before I attended the auctions. We all know about “auction fever,” and the goings on that happen in

the auction room. I thought that knowing something about the history of the coins I targeted at auction might be helpful in establishing values. For the most part, I would follow a plan. Occasionally, I would see a coin in lot viewing that knocked me over, so out went the plan.

Eventually, I realized that if I just got a few more catalogs from certain auction houses I would have a complete run. I didn't necessarily need those few catalogs for research, but the thought of completing a run of sales was interesting. Here we go again—I got hooked. This time, it was U.S. numismatic literature. I found out about Chapman, Elder, Cogan, and all the rest. My first attendance at a numismatic auction was in New York at George Kolbe's sale of the Lester Merkin library. George and I became good friends as I developed my library. Let's not forget the rest of the numismatic literature crew that helped out like Charlie Davis, John Bergman, Remy Bourne, Fred Lake, the Money Tree guys, and now David Fanning. Along the way I met Jack Collins and purchased his library.

Among my favorite literature items are plated 19th century catalogs. I can actually track a few coins in my collection back to some of those great sales by using the plates for comparison. My library has grown to over 1200 linear feet of books and includes complete catalog runs of most all the major auction houses including the vintage catalogs of the late 19th and early 20th century. Add in the manuscripts, the books, the autographed letters, price lists, club newsletters, dealer publications, and more ephemeral items than I can count. Some hook!

Known now mostly for my library of U.S. numismatic literature, let us not forget that if it wasn't for the coins, there would not be books about coins. I got hooked on collecting both U.S. coins and U.S. numismatic literature. And to think, it all started with a two-cent piece!



# Visiting Myron Xenos and the Money Tree Library

By Tom Harrison

In January 2008, after a twenty year hiatus from numismatics, I decided it was time to jump back into the hobby I had enjoyed so many years ago. Of course, during my earlier collecting life, my focus was on coins with a modest supporting library. However, during the late 1970s and throughout the 1980s, there was an emergence of numerous literature dealers, the birth of the NBS and a groundswell of enthusiasm by an ardent group of bibliophiles. It was during the resurgent wave of this long-neglected branch of the hobby that my fascination with numismatic literature surpassed my appetite for coins.

Where better to start than a call to the three book dealers I had purchased a few volumes from two decades earlier? So the call went out to George Kolbe, Charlie Davis and Myron Xenos. George and Charlie agreed to add my name to their mailing lists. However, Myron said he was no longer in the literature business. After we visited a bit, he invited me to come to Ohio with the assurance that I would be able to fill a few boxes with interesting items from his remaining stock. Considering it was a day's drive and a couple of nights in a motel, I told him I would think it over and call him in a couple of days.

Naturally, what choice did an irrational bibliomaniac with twenty years of pent up collecting deprivation have? It was off to Rocky River. Myron, an EA, said he would be swamped through tax season, so we agreed on a late spring visit.

As fate would have it, in 1985, recognizing their common interest in numismatic literature, a mutual friend introduced Myron and Ken Lowe at a local Cleveland coin show. This friendship evolved into their partnership in the Money Tree. The bookmen conducted twenty-nine auctions and produced the lively and informative house organ *Out on a Limb*. Following Ken's untimely death in February 1998, David Sklow joined Myron, and the duo conducted three additional sales under The Money Tree banner.

In June, accompanied by guarded optimism, my wife Pam and I set off for the Money Tree world headquarters in search of numismatic literature treasure. Upon our arrival Myron indicated he was selling the majority of his extensive library through a series of sales conducted by his friend and former partner David Sklow. Fortunately, he had countless duplicates and a seemingly limitless supply of ephemeral items he was willing to send my way. Myron suggested we start in the basement that primarily housed the post 1950 catalogs. Myron related how years ago literature dealer John Burns had brought a U-Haul truck and cleared out the basement. Ken recruited three football players from the high school where he taught to haul the 200 banker boxes from the basement. Sounding a little exasperated, Myron said mysteriously before long the basement was again brimming with literature. The next couple of hours,

I set aside several stacks of catalogs, and then it was off to lunch.

After lunch Myron led us up a steep set of stairs to the second floor of his office. The walls were concealed by overloaded bookshelves, the tables strained under mountains of books and most of the remaining floor space was laden with catalogs and periodicals. Part of the afternoon's diverse haul yielded significant runs of auction catalogs, a box of literature dealer advanced copies and miscellaneous issues of the *American Journal of Numismatics*.



Myron Xenos at home

The day flew by and it was soon time for dinner. In their always gracious manner, Myron and his wife, Daryl, invited us to join them at one of their favorite restaurants. During dinner Daryl asked if we had cleared out many shelves? Myron replied we had taken ten or twelve boxes, but had not put a dent in his trove. With that I suggested we return in a few weeks with my brother's van. Myron smiled at the prospect. It had been a great day, and looking back, this trip, literally spent knee deep in literature, reignited my enthusiasm for numismatic literature. The next morning, with the car's rear bumper just inches off the ground, we headed home.

We returned the following month, and in all but one of the ensuing years, we have made our annual spring visits. Whether enjoying a Greek Festival, outdoor dining with live music at the Winking Lizard, or cooking a steak at our table on a 500 degree stone at "Steak on a Stone," Myron and Daryl always entertained us with tales of their numismatic literature adventures. Recalling Myron's first-hand accounts of dining with the Norwebs, visits to the Champa library, and reminiscences of biblio personalities, all make for great memories.

Another highlight was the opportunity to explore Myron's personal library in his home. The well-designed literary repository was lit by track lighting and an incredible antique crystal chandelier. A quick survey of the titles reflected the depth of his numismatic interest. From classic volumes on ancient, world and United States works to amazing deluxe editions to vintage catalogs, these special occasions were a bibliophile's feast.

These multiple visits to the Buckeye State provided a unique opportunity to jump-start my library and broaden my appreciation for assembling a comprehensive library. Certainly, to a seasoned bibliophile, the majority of the material would seem commonplace. However, as a relative newcomer to the game, complete or nearly complete runs of catalogs by Lester Merkin, Frank Katen, Federal Coin Exchange and numerous others held much information and fascination. And Myron always sweetened each trip with a few special treats. Examples of these delights include a set

of photographs Ken and Myron used to illustrate their catalogs, a pen and ink portrait of B. Max Mehl, and Myron's full levant leather copy of Glenn Peterson's *The Ultimate Guide To Attributing Bust Half Dollars*.

To this day, unexpected packages of fascinating ephemeral items with a Rocky River postmark periodically show up on my doorstep. Since that pivotal phone call in January 2008, our annual visits have filled many feet of shelving, but more importantly, they have cemented a lasting friendship.



WHAT AN ASTONISHING THING A BOOK IS.

IT'S A FLAT OBJECT MADE FROM A TREE WITH  
FLEXIBLE PARTS ON WHICH ARE IMPRINTED LOTS  
OF FUNNY DARK SQUIGGLES.

BUT ONE GLANCE AT IT AND  
YOU'RE INSIDE THE MIND OF ANOTHER PERSON,  
MAYBE SOMEONE DEAD FOR THOUSANDS OF YEARS.  
ACROSS THE MILLENNIA, AN AUTHOR IS SPEAKING  
CLEARLY AND SILENTLY INSIDE YOUR HEAD,  
DIRECTLY TO YOU.

WRITING IS PERHAPS THE GREATEST OF HUMAN INVENTIONS,  
BINDING TOGETHER PEOPLE WHO NEVER KNEW EACH OTHER,  
CITIZENS OF DISTANT EPOCHS.

BOOKS BREAK THE SHACKLES OF TIME.

A BOOK IS PROOF THAT HUMANS ARE CAPABLE OF WORKING  
MAGIC.

CARL SAGAN

CHRIS  
RIDDLE

# My Introduction to the Numismatic Bibliomania Society

By Kellen Hoard

I had not been seriously involved in numismatics for long. It was 2016, and I was attending my first ever national show: the American Numismatic Association World's Fair of Money in Anaheim, California. At the time, I was just 12 years old. The show was an amazing and formative experience for me, as it was the first time I was surrounded by such passionate numismatists for days on end. While there, I walked the bourse floor, attended some Money Talks, and participated in a variety of other activities available to attendees. All of this was immensely enjoyable. However, one event in particular stuck out to me on the show schedule. It was titled "Numismatic Bibliomania Society General Meeting." I was not a collector of numismatic literature, but my passion for reading and possession of a few books from the Bowers series convinced me that I must attend the meeting.

I do not remember the exact time or room, but at some point in the early afternoon on the Saturday of the convention I walked into a medium-sized hotel meeting space. A few numismatists whom I did not recognize in the slightest were scattered around talking inside. I took a seat near the back. The meeting was soon called to order, and various updates about the club were shared by some NBS board members. Then, it was time for the lot viewing of the NBS Benefit auction. As I made way with



Wayne Homren, Kellen Hoard, Len Augsburger, Joel Orosz, and Eric Schena in Anaheim.

## *My Introduction to the Numismatic Bibliomania Society*

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others towards the front of the room to examine the items for sale, it was obvious I was being noticed. Through no fault of our own, the majority of the attendees and I had a several-decades' large age gap between us, which lent itself to some curiosity on both sides.

It was not long before David Fanning and George Kolbe kindly introduced themselves and welcomed me to the world of numismatic bibliomania. Throughout the rest of the meeting different members introduced themselves to me, and every single one of them taught me something fascinating about numismatics I had not known previously. Through their cordiality and education, I felt like one of them 30 minutes in. It was an amazing feeling. Near the end of the meeting, three gentlemen approached me. They introduced themselves as Joel Orosz, Len Augsburger, and Wayne Homren. The trio invited me to dinner that night with another man named Eric Schena. I was so overjoyed that I skipped back to my hotel room and announced to my mother (who was also staying there) that I *officially* loved numismatics. That night, we all went out to dinner at a nearby Hawaiian restaurant, and I have very fond recollections of that experience to this day.

It was in this way that I was introduced to the Numismatic Bibliomania Society: by a group of inviting and encouraging members who believed that I was worth guiding. Since then, I have helped to start the active NBS Facebook group and Instagram page, published two articles in this journal, and attended to the club's table for part of the time at the 2018 World's Fair of Money in Philadelphia, among other things. The NBS is, in my opinion, one of the superior organizations in our hobby. Whenever I come across a numismatist who shows even the slightest interest in numismatic literature, I guide them towards this club because I know that as a result they will learn, have fun, and become lifelong numismatic bibliomaniacs.



Anne Bentley and John Adams at the medallic exhibit at Massachusetts Historical Society in 2010

# Lessons from 40 Years of Collecting Numismatic Literature

By Wayne Homren

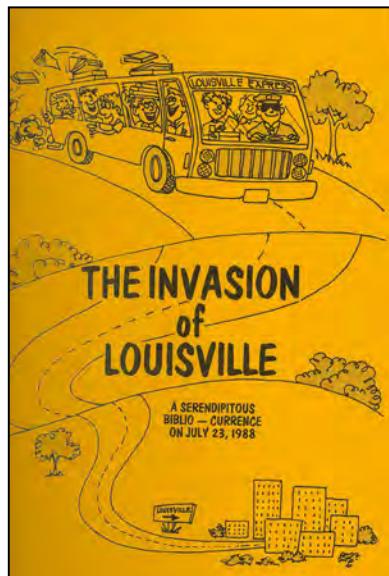
I joined NBS shortly after its founding, and here we are forty years later, still exploring and enjoying our common hobby of numismatic literature. Back then my numismatic library was comprised of a single shelf. Today I'm sitting in my home office surrounded by some 3,000 volumes. I went from one book nut friend in Pittsburgh (John Burns) to thousands of weekly email pen pals all around the world. It's a wonderful life! Along the way I picked up some lessons that served me well in numismatic literature, and life in general. Here they are, especially for the younger collectors among us.

## *Listen To Your Elders*

As luck would have it, one of the first ANA conventions I attended was the 1980 Cincinnati show. And among the events I attended was a very crowded presentation by John J. Ford at the Numismatic Bibliomania Society meeting. NBS had just been formed the year before by Jack Collins and George Kolbe, and this was the group's first public meeting. I'd collected coins since I was a kid but had only recently gotten more serious about learning about the hobby, picking up the odd coin book in used bookstores around Ann Arbor during grad school. I was a newbie numismatist in my early 20s. I had no real idea of who this Ford guy was, but I listened to what he had to say about the value of numismatic literature and research and I was convinced. I signed up as a member of NBS and redoubled my efforts to acquire books. Ford has a mixed reputation today but his advice that day was spot on.

## *Don't Be Shy*

The next year I wrote my first article for *The Asylum*. It was about searching for numismatic literature in used book stores. Back then in the pre-Internet days, that was one of the primary ways anyone bought books. It was no award-winning article, but I'm glad I took the plunge. It was something I was getting excited about, and I wanted



to share. I could have sat back like my normally quiet introverted self, worried that the editor or his readers wouldn't be interested in what a newbie could write. But no worries—we're all birds of a feather in this hobby and it was well received.

## *Don't Be Shy (Part Two)*

My friend John Burns was a big numismatic bibliophile, and far better connected in the hobby than I was. He learned that bibliophile Armand Champa was planning the numismatic literary event that would become known as the Invasion of Louisville at the 1988 Cincinnati convention. I'd never met Armand, but got his number from John and gave him a call. I introduced myself and wheedled an invitation to the event. It was a gutsy move for an introvert, but I REALLY wanted to be there. And it turned out to be one of the highlights of my entire numismatic career.

## *Look at Books*

Just like collecting coins, collecting books gets easier with experience. The more numismatic books you see in person and hold in your hands the better. The next time you see something you'll remember it in detail. The visit to Armand's library was the first time I got to see so many numismatic literature rarities in person, all in one place. It was a Master's level course all in one day. The experience was invaluable; in later years I could step into a bookstore or library and spot numismatic literature rarities from across the room just by their size, shape or color. After Louisville I made journeys to visit other numismatic bibliophiles and their libraries.

## *Make Friends*

If you like numismatic literature, what better way to see, learn about, and acquire books than to become friends with fellow bibliophiles? Numismatics in general is already filled with generous people willing and eager to share with fellow birds of a feather; numismatic literature even more so. During the Invasion of Louisville and later NBS biblio-events I've met dozens of great folks who became friends for life, including Eric Newman, Jules Reiver, Dave Hirt, Joel Orosz, Michael Sullivan, Armand Champa, Dan Hamelberg, John Adams, numismatic literature dealers George Kolbe, Frank and Laurese Katen, John Bergman, Myron Xenos and Ken Lowe of The Money Tree, David Sklow, Fred Lake, Charlie Davis, David Fanning and many others including John J. Ford himself. I visited many of them in their homes and offices all across the country. Who could ask for more?

## *Think Big*

This bit of advice isn't for everyone, but why buy books one at a time when you can buy a whole library at once? I've said before that a sufficiently advanced collector is indistinguishable from a dealer. The more books you handle, the more rarities you'll come across. For several years I put out my shingle as a numismatic literature dealer. I didn't compete with other dealers for retail sales—it was just a way to supercharge my acquisitions. I bought boxes of books and sometimes entire libraries at time, keeping what I needed for myself, constantly upgrading, and selling the duplicates through

Kolbe, The Money Tree, Fred Lake and others. My biggest acquisitions were the James Sloss and Donald Miller libraries and an original publisher's backstock hoard of the *American Journal of Numismatics*. Multiple rarities I never thought I could ever afford came to my doorstep in those years.

## Share

I've gone way overboard in the sharing department by publishing *The E-Sylum* every week, but all of us share in their own way. We have dozens of contributors to each issue of our print and electronic publications. Participate. Whether by contributing to an article, exhibiting your collection or speaking to a group, sharing is what it's all about. What fun is a great hobby like this if you don't share it with friends?

## Don't Worry—Just Collect

Seeing all the great coins and coin books in my new friends' collections and libraries was great fun, but I remember thinking sometimes that I was born too late. All the good stuff had already been bought up by the John Fords, Armand Champas and Eric Newmans of the world. What's left for me? And what could I even afford? But luckily I had an epiphany that I'd like to share with the younger collectors among us. You have a secret power and may not even realize it—your superpower is your youth itself. You are here today and collecting 40 years before everyone who comes after you. One day others will come along and wish they had a time machine to travel back to 2019 to snap up all the great bargains. They're all around you right now. So start collecting, just like I did, and enjoy a wonderful hobby.



# The True Value of a Numismatic Library

By Bradley S. Karoleff

I began collecting coins in 1965 when my parents purchased a couple Whitman folders for a birthday present at the local “five and dime.” Their investment of 50 cents for those two albums has paid huge dividends for me over the years.

During my formative years of collecting, very little numismatic literature was needed, much less being as readily available as today. My trusty Red Book with its partner Blue Book and a Brown & Dunn grading guide were what constituted a numismatic library for me. Soon a revolutionary new grading guide became available: *Photograde*. Now I was really set, or was I?

I do not remember just when or where I became aware of a little book, *Detecting Altered Coins* by Bert Harshe. I parted with a couple bucks to add it to my library. I was very close to completing my first set of Jefferson Nickels when it came time to search for the elusive 1950-D (this book really came in handy). I had my mom take me around to the local antique stores that routinely had coins for sale. In one I noticed the object of my search, the rare 50-D. Upon closer inspection I noticed something not quite right: it was an altered coin. Someone had removed part of the 9 on a 1959-D nickel to make it look like a 50-D! My investment in the book had saved me a \$5 mistake which was the better part of a month’s allowance. Thanks Bert, wherever you are!

This experience taught me the value of numismatic knowledge and put me on a quest to obtain a more complete library. During my search, I found the ANA and became a member, allowing me access to a whole new world of information.

I eventually purchased *US Mint and Coinage* by Don Taxay, which enriched my knowledge about how my newfound love, Bust Halves, were minted. I read the book over and over to grasp what the author told me about the first mint in Philadelphia. Soon my quest led me to learn about the John Reich Collectors Society, which I promptly joined as a charter member: another life-changing decision prompted by my search for additions to my growing library.

I decided to concentrate on the silver coins issued by our mint in Philadelphia by die marriage. A purchase of all the reference books concerning those issues was mandatory. Hey, I even found out that most of them were available in presentation leather bindings—of course I wanted one of those! One thing led to another and I soon exceeded my allotted shelf space (sound familiar?). More bookcases were needed and soon filled. Boxes of books were still stored in the basement until it was time to move to our next house. Thanks to all my friends who volunteered to help us move. I still remember them telling me that if I ever moved again to lose their numbers! A dozen large boxes full of books will do that.

After living in the new home for several years, with the purchase of another book-

case or two, I received one of the best gifts ever—built-in bookcases from my son. My library now takes up the entire wall of a room in the house and numerous other bookcases.

I have often told fellow collectors the value of my library, not only in pride of ownership and research value but in enjoyment of the hobby in general. While most of my coins must reside in a safe deposit box, my library sits proudly on a shelf ready for my perusal at a moment's notice. A numismatic question, no problem! Research for an article, simple. Just a visit with a favorite leather-bound volume, immediately satisfied. It's all right there, the cumulative numismatic research of generations. Wow!

I always enjoyed visits with the numismatic booksellers at major coin shows. I consistently allowed for time to look through the wares of Kolbe, Davis, Fanning, John Burns, O (Orville) J Grady and anyone else who had books. One fortuitous purchase was an old broken-down book from Grady when I could not find anything else of interest—*Handbuch der Alten Numismatik* by Dr. J G Th. Grasse. It was the first book I had seen with plates of embossed coins tinted in metallic ink. One interesting aspect of the book is that the plates tone much like the coins themselves. I was enthralled with the concept of this genre of books. This began my interest in books featuring embossed and tinted coin illustrations. I hunted for more titles featuring these plates with little success until Kolbe sold the Kirby Brown collection of books of this type. I was the successful bidder on some of the lots which doubled the size of my collection of this genre. A year or so later I contacted George about the unsold lots from that sale. He generously put me together with Kirby and I purchased the remaining lots along with his research into the collection. I am now about 90% complete with my collection, only lacking a couple rare titles. What a great side journey this has been!

One of my favorite books of this type is *A Description of Ancient and Modern Coins in the Cabinet Collection at the Mint of the United States* by Snowden. The book came to me in well-used condition but is one of my most treasured volumes. The price, at first, seemed a little high for this book in this worn condition. Upon closer inspection the true value of it was revealed to me by Orville. On a blank page in the front of the book there was a short inscription, “Property of Jacob Eckfeldt!” As a bonus, there was also a bookplate showing that Stewart Witham previously owned the book. Stew was a renowned collector/researcher of bust coinage. He had collected a remarkable set of Capped Bust Half Dimes and Half Dollars along with one of the best sets of error Capped Bust Halves ever assembled. I had the book rebound in leather, commemorating the provenance of the volume that will last generations.

One of my joys is obtaining autographed copies of most of my books: in-person



signatures, some with personal inscriptions, are preferred, but any source is acceptable. There is something special about speaking with the author about his specialty field of interest and hearing his passion for the subject when I obtain his signature. I have met many of the dignitaries of the hobby in this manner, interacting with them while obtaining something for my collection.

I built my library for my needs and desires. I have helped edit numismatic works and have received a coveted “authors edition” of the work in return. I have contributed to the realm of numismatic literature and had those issues specially bound for my own enjoyment. I continue to share my library with fellow collectors. But most of all, I continue to enjoy my library every day, if only to glance at it as I pass through the room. I hope your library has brought you as much joy and friendship as mine has me through the years.

Thank you to everyone who has authored a numismatic work, sold me a book or have become my friend through this wonderful hobby. You have certainly helped make my world more complete and enjoyable.



A tradition: an NBS dinner, in this case at the Cincinnati mid-Winter ANA, 3-20-1998. Starting at left, and going around the table: David Sklow, Sherry Sklow (mostly obscured); Connie Hamelberg; Dan Hamelberg; (?); person at head of table (?); on right side of table: Charles Davis; person partly obscured (?); Wayne Homren; not sure (possibly Dee Homren; Darryl Xenos; Myron Xenos

# Memories of Two Dozen Numismatic Bibliophiles Past

By George Kolbe

The below compilation is selective and the recollections are largely personal in nature. The list could have been longer and I have undoubtedly forgotten to include bibliophiles more than worthy of note. It is not intended to eulogize this remarkable cross-section of bibliophiles, rather it records memories of them seen through my eyes.

Among those remembered below are entrepreneurs, farmers, titans of industry, academics, white collar workers, and those who worked with their hands. All shared a love of numismatics and its literature, whether in real life they were school teachers, lawyers, financial advisors, political activists, restauranteurs, government employees, Mensa members, television directors, or scientific researchers. They are missed. *Tempus fugit.*

## Rick Bagg (1946–2019)

I met Rick Bagg in the parking lot of the Long Beach, California convention center in the late 1970s. On the trunk lid of his car, Jack Collins showed and sold Rick a small format plated Chapman sale. Perhaps under the influence of secondhand tetrahydrocannabinol-rich smoke that day, I do not recall the specific Chapman catalogue. Rick loved books. When Essex Numismatic Properties, a pioneering numismatic dealership, was reorganized, via Rick I purchased their nascent numismatic library. There were some noteworthy volumes; I remember an 1875 Crosby and an original plated Bushnell sale. Now and then over the years, Rick indulged his eye for wonderful numismatic works; an exceptional set of the first six volumes of *The Numismatist* was among his prized acquisitions.

## Harry Bass (1927–1998)

A very large addition to the Bass home in Highland Park, Texas featured Harry's office on the main level and his numismatic library on the second floor. Beyond a billiard table at one end, much of the ground floor was devoted to computers, monitors and other electronic equipment. Via a rolling office chair, Harry traveled from computer station to computer station with an alacrity born of untold hours spent there. He reminded me of the Professor in *The Wizard of Oz*. Up a flight of stairs was the equivalent to book lovers of numismatic nirvana. The huge room featured tall, packed-full bookcases around the perimeter, squared (i.e., each bookcase was two feet or so wide, on casters, and featured shelves on either side). The effect was overwhelming. Originally envisioned as an adjunct to the formation of Harry's world-class coin collection, the library became its own reason for being.

## John Bergman (1944–2000)

Among numismatic booksellers, John was a prince. Charles Davis epitomized him well: "Honest almost to a fault, and knowledgeable to the nth degree - this is how I will remember John." A quiet man by nature, after several adult beverages John sometimes became the life of the party. Following a 1986 auction at my home/office in Crestline, a number of sale attendees got together for dinner at *The Stockade*. All of us were in great spirits, especially John. Many of the guests were drinking white wine and soon began surreptitiously substituting their full glass for John's empty one, as he was otherwise engaged in conversation. After dinner it was thought best that I drive John to the motel cabin where he was spending the night. I waited in my car for a fair amount of time while John solved the complexities involved with pesky locks and keys. It is a tragedy that John left us just as he had taken early retirement to engage full time in the numismatic literature business. I still miss him, as I do so many of the remarkable characters remembered here.

## Del Bland (1933–2018)

Over three decades, Del was a frequent visitor to our offices in Mission Viejo, Santa Ana, and Crestline. He never left empty-handed. Routinely, Del and Bob Vail, who often accompanied him, loaded multiple boxes of auction sale catalogues and other classic American numismatic publications into the trunk of their car. Del, Bob, and sometimes Jan Valentine and/or John Bergman, would join Linda and me for dinner at *The Stockade*. Those were the days. For many years, Del criss-crossed the U.S. in search of large cents and auction sale catalogues. His extensive library, formed from a wealth of sources, enabled Del to establish pedigree chains for important large cents which, in turn, enabled him to uncover numismatic skulduggery of the highest order.

## John Burns (1958–2014)

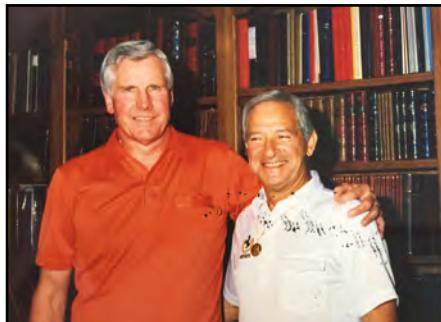
For many months following John's passing, I was mad at him. He was so damned smart, yet he could not manage to make a comfortable living. Now, I am just happy to remember what a good friend he was, to me and many others. At ANA summer conventions the numismatic booksellers, among them John, David Fanning, Charlie Davis, and I would get together for dinner on a free evening. One year John was the host and, after much research, picked out an excellent restaurant. It was a wonderful event and John was justifiably proud. I will always remember that evening.



John Burns holding the 1804 dollar and the 1913 nickel. Photo courtesy Pat McBride

## Armand Champa (1921–1997)

A larger-than-life personality, Armand Champa owned a number of popular roller skating rinks in Kentucky and was instrumental in popularizing rare American numismatic literature. He formed a remarkable million dollar library on the topic. Lesser known is Armand's love of Las Vegas. He frequently visited the Riviera Hotel and Casino, where he enjoyed a measure of fame, particularly as a high stakes Blackjack player and frequent diner at the casino's renowned Ristorante Italiano. Over the years, Armand was not shy to admit having lost over a million dollars at the Riviera's gaming tables.



Del Bland and Armand Champa in Louisville

Image courtesy of Charles Davis

## Elvira Clain-Stefanelli (1914–2001)

I visited Elvira several times, at the Smithsonian and at her nearby home. She was a numismatic institution. Somehow, her many valuable contributions — as curator of the national numismatic collection, and author of various numismatic books, chief among them the 1985 edition of her landmark *Numismatic Bibliography* — seem nowadays to be under-appreciated. She was a gracious, delightful person, always striving to promote scholarly numismatic study.

## Jack Collins (1939–1996)

The co-founder of The Numismatic Bibliomania Society was a talented person who led a multi-faceted, if secretive, life. He was a great person to have as a friend. A few years ago, a longtime Hollywood friend and show business insider inquired about Jack and subsequently provided much information heretofore unknown to his numismatic admirers. According to him, Jack's show biz friends included Raquel Welch, Lou Rawls, Dennis Hopper, Stephen Cannell, Engelbert Humperdinck, and Dean Martin.

Other observations made by Jack's Hollywood friend follow:

- “Jack kept his show biz life very separate from the coin biz life. Jack was very disciplined in business and a true professional.”
- “Jack as you know had a great sense of humor.”
- “Jack was always concerned about his height.”



Jack Collins

- “Everyone loved Jack.”
- “(Jack) used to appear on the Roger Morton Show in L.A.”
- “He changed his name to Jack Collins as he had a difficult name to spell, and wanted to be a comedian and an entertainment director-producer.”
- “He worked for Winters Rosen movie productions with Stephen Cannell.”
- “His life is worth a movie.”

Indeed.

### John Ford (1924–2005)

JJF lived in a single story home located on a golf course in a gated community in Scottsdale, Arizona. Upon entering, you were directed to remove your shoes (socks were ok). The carpeting was spotless, yet had never been cleaned. Those fortunate enough to be invited to view the library faced similar circumstrictions. Housed behind glass doors, JJF would remove a specified volume and it could be viewed—sort of—while it remained in his hands. The home, while spacious and well appointed, was but a shadow of what was originally envisioned when John moved to Arizona. The golf course house was to be a temporary abode while JJF supervised construction of the main home, located on a large lot with an unhindered view of Camelback Mountain and situated next door to Barry Goldwater's home. On one of my visits, Dr. Ford inquired about my general health (good) and “prescribed” three mineral supplements: magnesium, potassium, and zinc. I still take them and my general health remains good.



John Ford at ANA in 2000

Image courtesy Q. David Bowers

### Gordon Frost (1935–2011)

Back in the day, book dealers throughout the U.S. eagerly awaited delivery of *AB Bookman's Weekly*. Desirable numismatic works were often offered for sale in its pages but – more often than not – they had already been sold by the time my issue arrived. At some point I became aware that F. Gordon Frost was often the culprit. Alas, Briarwood, NY, where Gordon lived at the time, is about 35 miles from Clifton, NJ, where *AB Weekly* was mailed to subscribers. Later, Gordon built a home several miles away. It was a bibliophile's dream. Designed to his specifications, it featured a cavernous basement and long rows of sturdy shelving. In addition to providing a home for Gordon's *Antiquarian Bookman* treasures, it became full to overflowing with numismatic publications acquired hither and yon. Ostensibly, Gordon was a numismatic bookseller, yet like so many of his brethren, the thrill of the chase exceeded the joy of a sale. He was a credit to his professed avocation.

## George Fuld (1932–2013)

I am privileged to own George's set of the American Numismatic Society *Dictionary Catalogue of the Library*. The *Auction Catalogue* has been annotated throughout with George's additions and corrections. These volumes were indispensable to me over the years. The sale of the landmark Fuld library in two 1971 auctions conducted by Frank Katen invigorated the field and led to a whole generation of American numismatic book dealers. More importantly, George actually *used* his library and he was at the forefront of serious American numismatic research for a half century.

## Al Hoch (1935–2010)

Numismatic publishing is not an easy path to wealth. Al's alter ego, Quartermann Publications, produced for decades the best reprints of numismatic classics in the United States. His production standards were of the highest quality and Al routinely added great value to his reprints by including updated text written by experts in their respective fields. The fact that Al was a lousy businessman did not slow him down a whit. He loved what he was doing and doing it well was its own reward. American coin collectors and dealers are indebted to him.

## Frank Katen (1903–2001)

As noted by Julian Leidman, Frank was "the dean of American numismatic bibliophiles." His series of numismatic literature sales paved the way for future dealers. Frank was a proud, influential Democrat and was deeply involved in party politics and presidential campaigns for many years. He and Laurese were never shy. I met them in Colorado Springs in 1979 at the first ANA mid-winter convention. Laurese came up to my bourse table and said: "Hello, I'm Laurese Katen. You owe me money." Soon Frank followed, with a similar refrain. Cutting to the chase, the auction bill had already been paid, as the Katens soon determined upon their return home. It was an amusing way to meet!

## Fred Lake (1929–2016)

Who among us does not owe a debt of gratitude to Fred Lake? Over the years, Fred provided an unparalleled venue for the sale of bread and butter American numismatic publications. And, often, his frequent sales were salted with treasures to excite even the most jaded bibliophile. In the best possible sense, Fred was a hail fellow well met.

## Joe Lasser (1923–2011)

One year, Joe called around tax time. I happened to mention that I was funding my IRA. Joe made a few suggestions, which I followed and which produced salutary results. In succeeding years, Joe would often



Fred Lake

Image courtesy of Alan Workman



1992 NBS Numismatic Literature Symposium: Al Hoch, John Adams, Eric Newman, Q. David Bowers

Image courtesy of Charles Davis

make a call around that time of year and would refine his recommendations. End of story? No. Several years ago, a coin dealer friend visited me in Cedarpines Park, and somehow our mutual friend and customer's name came up. We soon discovered that Joe had provided good financial advice to both of us. Since then, I have spoken with several numismatic colleagues who share the same experience. I expect there are many more.

### **Joe Lepczyk (1940–1985)**

In 1978 I met Joe at a Southern California coin convention and purchased 8 or 10 plated Thomas Elder sales. With some trepidation I paid two or three hundred dollars each for the rarer ones. Not to worry. Shortly thereafter I manned my first bourse ANA table in Houston, Texas and, for four or five hundred dollars, sold nearly all of them the first day. It was an auspicious harbinger of many ANA's to come. Joe liked numismatic books and had an extensive library. He conducted an important numismatic book auction in 1980 and subsequently handled the private treaty sale of a particularly fine set of the first six volumes of *The Numismatist*.

### **Ken Lowe (1945–1998)**

Like his fellow bibliophile John Bergman, Ken left us far too early. He too was about to embark on a second career as a full-time numismatic bookseller. Ken's enthusiasm and love of the hobby was unparalleled and *Out on a Limb*, published with his business partner and fellow bibliophile Myron Xenos, eloquently captured those affinities.

### **Harry Manville (1929–2015)**

A customer from day one, Harry soon became a friend. He was enthusiastic in his pursuits. His lust for information, leavened with a love for books, resulted in a world class numismatic library on English numismatics. The library informed his various collecting interests and it formed the basis of his multi-volume bibliography of British numismatics and biographies of numismatists. It is the best single-country numismatic bibliography ever written.

## Eric Newman (1911–2017)

A numismatic giant, Eric loved his books for the information they contained. He was not entirely immune to their material allure, however. In January 1988 he composed a poem about a numismatic book.

*The American Accountant* by Chauncy Lee,  
At a George Kolbe auction was acquired by me.  
Its condition was choice for its 1797 date,  
And unfolding turned corners was a welcome fate.  
The first printed dollar sign was its principal feature,  
And its money exchange tables a valuable teacher.  
Its only plate of coins is a gem indeed,  
Done by New York Bank note engraver Abner Reed.  
I will give its numismatic content many more looks,  
Now that it's one of my favorite books.

## John Jay Pittman (1913–1996)

An American Numismatic Association stalwart, John was perennially on the Board and served as ANA President for a number of years. He routinely attended the association's summer conventions and had an affinity for fine champagne. Most evenings he could be found in the convention hotel lounge indulging his second passion. John's coin collection was legendary and he displayed great rarities, often placed casually in a display case in the exhibits section. On other occasions he would pull wonderful gems from his pocket and show them to anyone expressing interest. John was a tireless promoter of coin collecting and an ardent bibliophile.

## Art Rubino (1938–2006)

Literally a Parnassus on Wheels, Art and his son traveled the U.S. with a truck full of numismatic books. His extensive stock was housed in sturdy wooden book boxes with one side open. When stacked on top of each other with the open side out, they effectively formed bookcases and, at various coin conventions over the country, Art's truck full of book boxes became a book store. The time and effort involved was not inconsequential and Art's prices tended to reflect that. Nonetheless, Art's firm, Numismatic Arts of Santa Fe, provided a valuable service to coin collectors and introduced many to the wonderful world of numismatic literature.

## Frank Van Zandt (1949–2004)

How many numismatic bibliophiles live on a road named for their forbears? For generations, the Van Zandt family were farmers in Livonia, New York. Frank lived in a farmhouse over 150 years old, on a country road bearing the family name. In the day, it was utilized to drive cattle to the nearby river. Frank also came from an old-time family of coin collectors, formed a fine numismatic library, and served as secretary-treasurer of the Numismatic Bibliomania Society. If sometimes irascible, Frank was an ardent bibliophile, also forming an extensive collection of books on New York history.

## Cal Wilson (1944–2018)

One day in 1982, Cal called to inform me that he was about to publish a new publication, primarily devoted to rare and desirable American numismatic literature. Entitled *Wilson's Numismatic Repository*, later *The Repository*, Cal quipped that his wife referred to it as *The Suppository*. In truth, it was a groundbreaking newsletter, well received by the numismatic literature community. Talented and filled with enthusiasm, Cal was active through most of the 1980s. Sadly, like R.W. McLachlan's "comet" type of numismatist, "his light suddenly goes out and the numismatic world knows him no more forever."

## Ran Zander (1914–2004)

Throughout the 1980s and beyond, Randolph Zander anonymously consigned a great many classic numismatic works to the annual Kolbe/Spink auction sales in New York City. Invariably well-preserved and covering the world numismatics spectrum, Ran's consignments never failed to considerably enhance the overall quality of the New York sales. Ran had a number of the books in his library finely bound by Sangorski and Sutcliffe; others were nicely bound in Portugal and elsewhere. The quality of his library reflected the quality of the man.



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Numismatic-Bibliomania-Society

Dedicated to the NBS by Michael E. Marotta  
**The Happy Printer by Henry Austin Dobson**  
“Hoc est vivere.”--Martial.

The Printer's is a happy lot:  
Alone of all professions,  
No fateful smudges ever blot  
His earliest “impressions.”

The outgrowth of his youthful ken  
No cold obstruction fetters;  
He quickly learns the “types” of men,  
And all the world of “letters.”

With “forms” he scorns to compromise;  
For him no “rule” has terrors;  
The “slips” he makes he can “revise”—  
They are but “printers’ errors.”

From doubtful questions of the “Press”  
He wisely holds aloof;  
In all polemics, more or less,  
His argument is “proof.”

Save in their “case,” with High and Low,  
Small need has he to grapple!  
Without dissent he still can go  
To his accustomed “Chapel,”

From ills that others scape or shirk,  
He rarely fails to rally;  
For him, his most “composing” work  
Is labour of the “galley.”

Though ways be foul, and days are dim,  
He makes no lamentation;  
The primal “fount” of woe to him  
Is—want of occupation:

And when, at last, Time finds him grey  
With over-close attention,  
He solves the problem of the day,  
And gets an Old Age pension.

<http://www.public-domain-poetry.com/>

# NBS Thoughts

By Clifford Mishler

When I was asked to share my thoughts on the presence, development and role of the Numismatic Bibliomania Society on this occasion of its 40th anniversary, my initial inclination was to decline to do so as I am really a membership short-timer, perhaps dating back no more than 12-15 years or so.

As a Johnny-come-lately, I have come to sincerely admire *The Asylum* and appreciate *The E-Sylum* being in my Internet “inbox” upon arrival at my office every Monday morning. Actually, I probably signed on to receive the latter from Wayne Homren some months, perhaps even two or three years, before lending my membership support to the Society.

Prior to my retirement separation from Krause Publications in 2003, the NBS was one of those numismatic frills, in my mind, that I did not have the time to shoehorn in on my busy business schedule, so I allowed it to just exist out there as an element of our hobby community. Though not ignorant of its existence and worth, I did not value the added dimensions that it could provide.

Since coming on board, I would not be without my membership or either benefit!

I doubt that there has been an issue of *The Asylum* that has arrived in my mailbox that has not treated me to some new and valuable information that has enhanced my appreciation of the documented history that was captured by earlier generations and passed down to our benefit today. In the case of *The E-Sylum*, there has certainly not been a week that has not conveyed some interesting bits of news or reflections.

As the late Aaron Feldman was wont to promote—buy the book, before the coin—numismatic information is the vital ingredient for informed and rewarding pursuit of our hobby. That’s the bottom line for the Society. It contributes to greater appreciation and encouragement of those toiling today in building upon the invaluable contributions of those who in times past turned the first furrows.

As someone who, to some degree, lived the past and greatly appreciates the present—my first numismatic reference back in 1950 was a 36-page Tatham Stamp & Coin Company catalog of goodies to entice the novice—as goes the familiar refrain, “we’ve come a long way, baby!” The heart of that accomplishment has been provided by the NBS’ present and past membership.

Everyone in the numismatic hobby community owes them our everlasting gratitude!



# And The Winner Is...

## The Awards of the Numismatic Bibliomania Society 1986 – 2018

By Joel J. Orosz

Awards are the only tangible incentive provided by the Numismatic Bibliomania Society to those writing and otherwise contributing to the good of the order. Over its first four decades of existence, the NBS has provided Awards for Best Article published in *The Asylum*; for Best First-Time Author in *The Asylum*; for Overall Contributions to Numismatic Literature; and for Lifetime Achievement in Numismatic Literature. This seems, upon first recognizance, like an apropos “fearsome foursome” of recognitions for jobs done well.

Upon more diligent examination, however, it turns out that little about the history of NBS Awards is as straightforward as it seems. In attempting to document a list of winners, a number of kinks appear in the compilation, most notably:

- No Awards of any description were bestowed by the NBS during the first seven years (1979-1986) of its existence
- None of the NBS Awards has been given continuously during the 34 years that awards have been bestowed
- Some of the Awards have been given under different names at different times
- Some Awards have been discontinued altogether
- For 2003, the name of the Best Article winner is lost to history
- From 2005 to 2008, no Best Article Award was bestowed
- In the early years of the Best Article Award (1987 to 1995), the Award was presented as an honorary recognition for a body of work, rather than for publication of a specific article in *The Asylum*.
- In some instances, it is unclear as to exactly which article the Award winner was honored for contributing.

The lists of awards and award winners that follow is compiled from records published in *The Asylum* from 1986 (the date that the first NBS Award was established) to date; in *The E-Sylum* from its commencement in September of 1999; and from various sources, both published and unpublished, preserved in the NBS Archives. In each case, the name of the winner, and the article or other achievement for which the winner was recognized, is provided, with the citation to this information included in brackets.

### *Armand Champa Award for Best Article in The Asylum*

Established at NBS Board Meeting, August 7, 1986 [*The Asylum*, Vol 4, No 3, Autumn, 1986]

Winner for 1986, awarded at NBS annual meeting, 1987 [*The Asylum*, Vol 4, No 3, Autumn 1986]:

Carling Gresham. For “Don José Toribio Medina. A Man for any Reason: His Numismatic Works” appearing in Vol 3, Nos 3&4, Fall-Winter, 1985 and in Vol 4, Nos 1&2, Spring-Summer, 1986.

Winners for 1987, awarded at NBS annual meeting, 1988 [Vol 6 No 3, Autumn 1988]:

John W. Adams and John J. Ford. Possibly honorary designations, since neither had a full-scale article published in Vol 5 of *The Asylum*. Adams contributed a short notice, “*United States Numismatic Literature, Volume II*” appearing in Vol 4, Nos 1-2, Spring -Summer, 1986, and Ford apparently was recognized for a presentation on the subject of his numismatic library given at the 1987 NBS annual meeting, in Atlanta (but not published in *The Asylum*), per Vol 5, No 4, Winter, 1987.

Winner for 1988, awarded at NBS annual meeting, 1989 [Vol 7, No 3, Autumn 1989]:

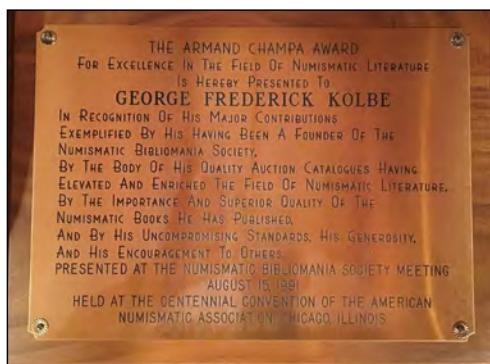
Eric P. Newman and Q. David Bowers. Possibly honorary designations, since neither had a full-scale article published in Vol 6 of *The Asylum*. Newman wrote a short poem, “A Numismatic Book,” appearing in Vol 6, No 4, Winter, 1988; Bowers wrote an article, “Revisiting the Early 1950s,” appearing Vol 5, No 1, Spring 1987, which should technically have been considered for award in 1988.

Winner for 1989, awarded at NBS annual meeting, 1990 [No name(s) published in *The Asylum*]

Winners for 1990, awarded at NBS annual meeting, 1991 [Vol 9, No 4, Fall 1991]:

George Frederick Kolbe and Jack Collins. Honorary designations to recognize the co-founders of the NBS. Neither wrote articles published in Vol 8. There was an article by Kolbe, “Al Szego—A Remembrance” appearing in Vol 9, No 4, Fall 1991, which technically should have been considered for award in 1992. The plaques for both Kolbe and Collins demonstrate that the name of the citation had by 1991 been revised to “The

Armand Champa Award for Excellence in the Field of Numismatic Literature”



Winner for 1991, awarded at NBS annual meeting, 1992 [Vol 10 No 4, Fall 1992]:

Joel J. Orosz. An honorary designation, “In recognition of his contributions to *The Asylum* as Editor, Board member, and columnist.” Orosz had contributed his “Printer’s Devil” columns in each of the four numbers of *The Asylum* published in 1991, so the award could have been made for a specific column, had the Board chosen to do so.

**Winners for 1992, awarded at NBS annual meeting, 1993 [Vol 11, No. 3, Summer 1993]:**

George Fuld and Frank Katen. Honorary designations, since Fuld had, up to this point, written nothing for *The Asylum*, and Katen's sole contribution, "The Wylie Hoard," had appeared years earlier, in Vol 7, No 4, Winter 1989]

**Winner for 1993, awarded at NBS annual meeting, 1994 [Vol 12, No 3, Summer 1994]:**

John Bergman. Most likely an honorary designation, although the estimable Mr. Bergman had written an article, "How to Pack Books," appearing in Vol 8, No. 2, Summer, 1990, and a review, "The Sale of the Adolph Hess Library," appearing Vol 9, No 3, ANA Centennial, 1991.

**Winner for 1994, awarded at NBS annual meeting, 1995 [Vol 13, No 3, Fall 1995]:**

Del Bland. An honorary designation, for Bland had, up to this point, written nothing for *The Asylum*.

**Winner for 1995, awarded at NBS annual meeting, 1996 [Vol 14, No 3, Nos 2-4, Fall 1996]:**

Denis Loring. An honorary designation, for Loring had, up to this point, written nothing for *The Asylum*.

The Armand Champa Award, originally intended in 1986 to honor the author of the best article published in *The Asylum*, was unambiguously bestowed for this purpose only once, in 1987, and at least by 1991 became a means of honoring people "For Excellence in the Field of Numismatic Literature." Curiously, this lifetime achievement aspect was in effect from 1988 to 1995, during most of which time (1991 to 1996), the NBS was giving an entirely distinct Award specifically to honor people for that very purpose (see below).

The Armand Champa Award for Excellence in the Field of Numismatic Literature was discontinued after 1996. It was replaced, ultimately, with three awards. The first, honoring the original intent of the Champa Award to recognize the best article appearing in *The Asylum*, was the NBS Writer's Award, instituted in 1997, and first bestowed in 1998. The second, honoring the lifetime achievement intent of the Champa Award (as it was actually bestowed from 1987 to 1996), was the Aaron Feldman Award for Lifetime Achievement in Numismatic Literature, which was presented from 1991 to 1996. The Feldman Award was ultimately superseded by the third successor to the Champa Award, George Frederick Kolbe Award for Lifetime Achievement in Numismatic Literature, which was instituted and first bestowed in 2010.

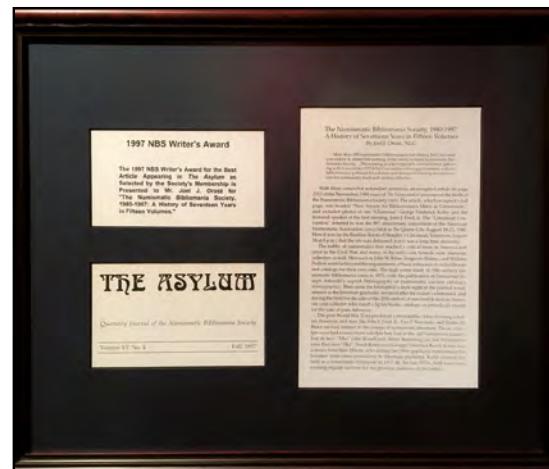


## The NBS Writers' Award for Best Article in *The Asylum*

Established at NBS Board meeting, 1997 [Vol 15, No 3, Summer-Fall 1997]

**Winner for 1997, awarded at NBS annual meeting, 1998 [Vol 16, No 3, Summer 1998]:**

Joel J. Orosz. For "The Numismatic Bibliomania Society, 1980-1997: A History of Seventeen Years in Fifteen Volumes" appearing in Vol 15, No 4, Fall 1997.



**Winners for 1998, awarded at NBS annual meeting, 1999 [The E-Sylum, Vol 2, No 33, August 16, 2009]:**

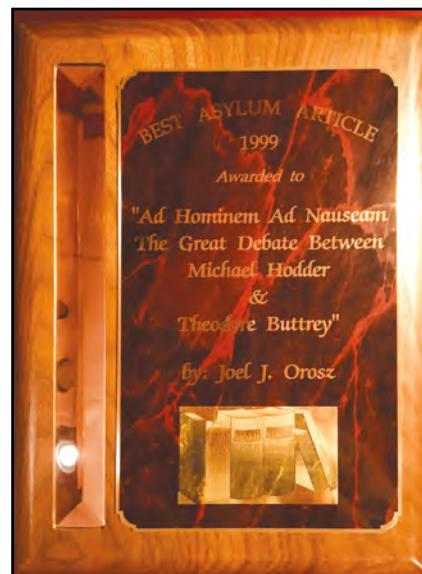
Randolph Zander. For "Some Random Numismatic Reminiscences, Parts 1-3, appearing in Vol 16, Nos 2-4, Spring, Summer, and Fall, 1998.

**Winner for 1999, awarded at NBS annual meeting, 2000 [The E-Sylum, Vol 3, No 33, August 13, 2000]:**

Joel J. Orosz. For "Ad Hominem Ad Nauseam: The 'Great Debate' Between Michael Hodder and Theodore Buttrey", appearing in Vol 17, No 3, Fall 1999.

**Winner for 2000, awarded at NBS annual meeting, 2001 [The E-Sylum, Vol 4, No 34, August 19, 2001]:**

Joel J. Orosz. for his "Printer's Devil" column, "Missing Masterpieces: The Twilight Zone of American Numismatic Literature" appearing in Vol 18, No 3, Summer 2000.



**Winner for 2001, awarded at NBS annual meeting, 2002 [Clipping from 8-26-02 issue of Coin World in NBS Archives]:**

Pete Smith. For "Frank Katen vs. the ANA" in Vol 19, No 1, Winter 2001.

**Winner for 2002, awarded at NBS annual meeting, 2003 [Vol 21, No 3, Summer 2003]:**

Q. David Bowers. For "The Fascinating Challenge of Numismatic Research" appearing in Vol 20, No 3, Summer 2002.

**Winner for 2003, awarded at the NBS annual meeting, 2004 [No name published in either *The Asylum* or *The E-Sylum*.]**

**Winner for 2004, awarded at the NBS annual meeting, 2005 [Vol 23, No 4, Fall 2005]:**

David F. Fanning. For “An Annotated Bibliography of the Published Numismatic Writings of Walter H. Breen,” appearing in Vol. 22, No 3, Summer 2004.

**Winner for 2005: No winner named [E-mail from David Yoon to Joel J. Orosz, March 9, 2019]**

**Winner for 2006: No winner named [E-mail from David Yoon to Joel J. Orosz, March 9, 2019]**

**Winner for 2007: No winner named [E-mail from David Yoon to Joel J. Orosz, March 9, 2019]**

**Winner for 2008: No winner named [E-mail from David Yoon to Joel J. Orosz, March 9, 2019]**

**Winner for 2009, awarded at the NBS annual meeting, 2010 [Vol 28, Nos 3-4, July-December 2010]:**

Leonard Augsburger. For “The One Hundred Greatest Items of United States Numismatic Literature: A Survey of the Numismatic Bibliomania Society, Part 1” appearing in Vol 27 No 1 January-March 2009 and “Part 2,” appearing in Vol 27, No 2, April-June 2009.

**Winner for 2010, awarded at the NBS annual meeting, 2011 [Vol 29, No 3, July-September 2011]:**

Frank Campbell. For “Fifty Years in a Numismatic Library,” appearing in Vol 28, Nos 3-4, July-December 2010.

### *Joel J. Orosz Award for Best Article in The Asylum*

[Established by NBS Board at 2011 Annual Meeting [Vol 29, No 3, July-September 2011, in recognition of the most prolific contributor to the first three decades of *The Asylum*]

**Winner for 2011, awarded at NBS annual meeting, 2012 [Vol 30, No 3, July-September 2012]:**

Pete Smith. For “Three Degrees of Dave Bowers,” appearing in Vol 29, No. 4, October-December 2011.

**Winner for 2012, awarded at the NBS annual meeting, 2013 [Vol 31, No 2, April-June 2013]:**

Roger Siboni, John L. Howes and Buell Ish, “The Collectors and Their Collections: A Chap-



Joel J. Orosz

ter from *The State Coinage of New Jersey*, appearing in Vol 30, No 2, April-June 2012.

**Winner for 2013, awarded at the NBS annual meeting, 2014 [Vol 32, No 3, July-September 2014]**

George Frederick Kolbe. For “The Reminiscences of a Numismatic Bookseller,” appearing in Vol 31, Nos 1, 2 and 4, January-March; April-June; and October-December, 2013.

**Winner for 2014, awarded at the NBS annual meeting, 2015 [Vol 33, No 3, July-September 2015]:**

John Kraljevich, Jr. For “In Memory of a Mensch: John H. Burns” appearing in Vol 32, No 1, January-March 2014



**Winner for 2015, awarded at the NBS annual meeting, 2016 [Vol 34, No 3, Autumn 2016]:**

David Yoon. For “The First ‘Catalogue’ of the ANS Library” appearing in Vol 33, No 4, October-December, 2015.

**Winner for 2016, awarded at NBS annual meeting, 2017 [Vol 35, No 3, Autumn 2017]:**

Christopher Faulkner. For “In Defense of a Library” appearing in Vol 34, No 4, Winter 2016.

**Winner for 2017, awarded at NBS annual meeting, 2018 [Vol 36, No 3, Autumn 2018]**

Joel J. Orosz. For his column “ASSOCIATIONS: Autographs • Annotations • Inscriptions,” *Numismatique du Voyage du Jeune Anacharsis* appearing in Vol 35, No 1, Spring 2017.

### *Jack Collins Award for Best First-Time Author in The Asylum*

Established and endowed with a corpus of \$1,000 by the family of the late Jack Collins at NBS Board meeting, 2009, [*The E-Sylum*, Vol 12, No. 33, August 16, 2009]

**Winner for 2008, awarded at the 2009 NBS annual meeting [*The E-Sylum*, Vol 12, No 33, August 16, 2009]:**

Bill Bugert. For “The Martin Luther Beistle Book on Half Dollars” appearing in Vol 26, No 1, January-March 2008.



Jack Collins

**Winner for 2009, awarded at the 2010 NBS annual meeting [Vol 28, Nos 3-4, July-December 2010]:**

Max Spiegel. For “A Visit to the Historic Mehl Building” appearing in Vol 27, No 1, January-March 2009.

**Winner for 2010, awarded at the 2011 NBS annual meeting [Vol 29, No 3, July-September 2011]:**

Harvey Stack. For “The Stack Family Library Sale” appearing in Vol 28, No 1, January-March 2010.

**Winner for 2011, awarded at the 2012 NBS annual meeting [Vol 30, No 3, July-September, 2012]:**

James Higby. For “Looks Like I Picked the Wrong Week to Give Up Sniffing Books” appearing in Vol 29, No 4, October-December 2011.

**Winner for 2012, awarded at the NBS annual meeting, 2013 [Vol 31, No. 2, April-June 2013]:**

Christopher Faulkner. For “The Man who Slept in the Library of Parliament” appearing in Vol 30, No 4, October-December 2012.

**Winner for 2013, awarded at NBS annual meeting, 2014 [Vol 32, No 3, July-September, 2014]:**

Arnold Tescher. For “Hidden Voices in the ANS Archives: Emmanuel J. Attinelli Heard Again” appearing in Vol 31, No 4, October-December 2013.

**Winner for 2014, awarded at NBS annual meeting, 2015 [Vol 33, No 3, July-September, 2015]:**

Eleonora Giampiccolo. For “A Brief History of the *Medagliere* of the Vatican Library” appearing in Vol 32, No 4, October-December 2014.

**Winner for 2015, awarded at NBS annual meeting, 2016 [Vol 34, No 3, Autumn 2016]:**

Raymond Williams. For “Charles Bushnell’s Manuscript ‘Early Currency’” appearing in Vol 33, No 2, April-June, 2015.

**Winner for 2016, awarded at NBS annual meeting, 2017 [Vol 35, No 3, Autumn 2017]:**

Shanna Berk Schmidt. For “The Harlan J. Berk, Ltd. Numismatic Library” appearing in Vol 34, No 2, Summer 2017.

**Winner for 2017, awarded at NBS annual meeting, 2018 [Vol 36, No 3, Autumn 2018]:**

Alan Workman. For “Fred Lake: A Bookseller’s Retrospective” appearing in Vol 35, No 1, Spring 2017.



Shanna Schmidt accepting her Jack Collins Award from Tom Harrison, NBS President in 2016.

Photo by Len Augsburger

## *Aaron Feldman Award for Lifetime Achievement*

Established at NBS Board meeting, 1991 [Vol 9, No 4, Fall 1991]

[This is distinct from the Aaron Feldman Memorial Exhibit Award, which was established and endowed by the NBS Board in the same annual Board meeting in 1991]

Winner for 1991, awarded at 1991 NBS annual meeting: Armand Champa [Vol 9, No 4, Fall 1991].

Winners for 1992, awarded at 1992 NBS annual meeting: Al Hoch and Wayne Homren [Vol 10, No 4, Fall 1992].

Winner for 1993, awarded at 1993 NBS annual meeting: Charles Davis [Vol 11, No 3, Summer 1993].

Winner for 1994, awarded at 1994 NBS annual meeting: Martin Gengerke [Vol 12, No 3, Summer 1994].

Winner for 1995, awarded at 1995 NBS annual meeting: Michael Hodder [Vol 13, No 3, Fall 1995].

Winner for 1996, awarded at 1996 NBS annual meeting: Frank Van Zandt [Vol 14, Nos 2-4, Fall 1996].

## *Jack Collins Award for Overall Contributions to Numismatic Literature*

[Established at the 1997 NBS Board Meeting, Vol 15, No 3, Summer-Fall 1997]

Winner for 2000, awarded at the 2000 NBS Annual Meeting: William Malkmus [*The E-Sylum*, Vol 3, No 37, September 10, 1997].

Winner for 2001, awarded at 2001 NBS annual meeting: Q. David Bowers [*The E-Sylum*, Vol 4, No 34, August 19, 2001].

Winner for 2002 awarded at NBS annual meeting, 2003: Wayne Homren [NBS Board meeting notes, NBS Archives].

## *George Frederick Kolbe Award for Lifetime Achievement in Numismatic Literature*

[Established confidentially at NBS Board Meeting, 2009. Obverse of Award medal designed by Marc Ricard, Rev designed by Charles Ricard, [*The E-Sylum*, Vol 13 No 34, August 22, 2010].

Winners for 2010, awarded at NBS annual meeting, 2010: George Frederick Kolbe (#1) and John W. Adams (#2). [Vol 28, Nos 3-4, July-December, 2010].



George F. Kolbe

Winner for 2011, awarded at NBS annual meeting, 2011: Al Hoch (#3) [Vol 29, No 3, July-September, 2011].

No award made in 2012 [Vol 30, No 3, July-September 2012].

Winner for 2013, awarded at NBS annual meeting, 2013: Dan Hamelberg (#4). [Vol 31, No 2, April-June 2013].

No award made in 2014 [Vol 32, No 3, July-September, 2014].

Winner for 2015, awarded at NBS Board annual meeting, 2015: Wayne Homren (#5). [Vol 33, No 3, July-September 2015].

No award made in 2016 [Vol 34, No 3, Autumn 2016].

No award made in 2017 [Vol 35, No 3, Autumn 2017].

No award made in 2018 [Vol 36 No 3, Autumn 2018].



John W. Adams with the GFK Medal in 2010

## Coda

A closer examination of the awards for best articles and for lifetime achievement in numismatic literature brings to mind an anecdote from the life of Lord Louis Mountbatten. On May 23, 1941, Mountbatten was in command of the destroyer *HMS Kelly*, which was attacked by 24 enemy dive bombers, and quickly sunk. A member of the crew named Fred Garner surfaced and turned to the first shipmate he spotted in the water beside him, and blurted out, "Funny how scum always rises to the top!" It was only then that he realized that the man bobbing next to him was the ship's skipper, Lord Louis.

For both categories of best article and lifetime achievement, the "scum" has indeed risen to the top in terms of first-time winners, repeat winners, back-to-back winners, eponymous winners, and those who have won awards in both categories. These honorees have been recognized over the years with a wide variety of plaque styles, ranging the traditional metal-mounted-on-wood, to etched glass, to framed excerpts of the winning article.

To quickly summarize the foregoing data, the Writers' Awards have been:

1. **The Armand Champa Award for Best Article in *The Asylum*** (nominally 1985-1996, but awarded to best author only once, for 1985); thereafter effectively, and by at least 1991 officially, **The Armand Champa Award for Excellence in the Field of Numismatic Literature** thus becoming a lifetime

achievement Award in numismatic literature)

2. **The NBS Writers' Award for Best Article in *The Asylum* (1997-2010)**
3. **Joel J. Orosz Award for Best Article in *The Asylum* (2011 to date)**
4. **The Jack Collins Award for Best New Author in *The Asylum* (2009 to date, currently the senior active Award)**

The Lifetime Achievement Awards have been:

1. **The Armand Champa Award for Excellence in the Field of Numismatic Literature** (effectively, 1988-1996)
2. **The Aaron Feldman Award for Lifetime Achievement** (1991-1996; which means that from 1991 to 1996, the NBS was giving two lifetime achievement awards ever year, and in two of those years, 1991 and 1993, three men were named each year)
3. **Jack Collins Award for Overall Contributions to Numismatic Literature** (2003-2006, which makes our late co-founder the only person to be distinguished by having two different Awards named in his honor; fittingly, the two Awards span both categories of writing and of lifetime achievement)
4. **The George Frederick Kolbe Award for Lifetime Achievement in Numismatic Literature** (2010 to date)

## Writers' Awards

Total Award Winners, 1985 to date: 26 individuals

Initial Award Winners:

- Armand Champa Award: Carling Gresham, 1985
- NBS Writers' Award: Joel J. Orosz, 1997
- Joel J. Orosz Award: Pete Smith, 2011
- Jack Collins Award: Bill Bugert, 2009

Multiple Award Winners:

- Joel J. Orosz. Writers' Awards in 1997, 1999, 2000, and Joel J. Orosz Award in 2017 (Orosz was the first repeat winner of a Writer's Award; the only person to win NBS awards in consecutive years; and one of two to win an eponymous Award)
- Pete Smith. Writer's Award in 2002, Joel J. Orosz Award in 2011
- Christopher Faulkner. Jack Collins Award for Best New Author in 2012, and Joel J. Orosz Award in 2016 (Faulkner is the only person to have won both the Collins and the Orosz Awards)
- First woman to win a Writers' Award: Eleonora Giampiccolo, Jack Collins Award for Best New Author, 2014

## Lifetime Achievement Awards

### Total Award Winners, 1988 to date: 27 individuals

#### Initial Award Winners:

Armand Champa Award: John W. Adams and John J. Ford, 1988

- Aaron Feldman Award: Armand Champa, 1991

- Jack Collins Award: William Malkmus, 2000

- George F. Kolbe Award: George F. Kolbe and John W. Adams (Kolbe is the first winner of an eponymous Award, and one of only two to achieve that distinction)

#### Multiple Award Winners:

- Wayne Homren. Feldman Award in 1992; Collins Award in 2003, Kolbe Award in 2015 (Homren is the only person to win in three different categories of lifetime achievement awards)
- Q. David Bowers. Champa Award in 1989, and Collins Award in 2001 (Bowers is the first two-time NBS Lifetime Achievement Award winner)
- John W. Adams. Champa Award Winner in 1988; Kolbe Award winner, 2010
- Al Hoch. Feldman Award winner in 1992; Kolbe Award winner in 2011

First person to win a solo Lifetime Achievement Award: Joel J. Orosz. Champa Award, 1992

Only person to be named “Honorary NBS Chairman for Life,” Frank Katen [Vol 5, No 4, Winter 1987]

(The appointment did not outlive its recipient. In Vol 12, No 2, Spring 1994, NBS Board member Michael Sullivan authored a review of Part 1 of the Katen Library sale, held on March 25-26, 1994. Sullivan’s review was frankly critical, especially about mistakes Katen had made in cataloging his own library. Katen was dismayed when no NBS officer or Board member published a rebuttal to Sullivan’s review, or apologized for its publication in *The Asylum*. In a letter sent to NBS President P. Scott Rubin on November 12, 1994, Katen resigned his NBS membership, never to return to the fold.

It is indisputable that the first four decades of the NBS Awards have been an informative, if somewhat idiosyncratic, and occasionally incomplete, chronicle of the NBS’s development. Like Celine Dion’s heart, the NBS Awards program will go on and on. It will continue to recognize excellence, and let us hope that its outcomes will be recorded more faithfully than has been the case in the past. Perhaps an Award should be established for the oft-anonymous scribes to encourage such diligence on their parts?



# Numismatic and Bibliographic Beginnings: A Memoir

By Ira Rezak

It's been about seventy years since I started collecting: first coins, and later medals, too. In Brooklyn, where this habit of mine developed soon after the second World War, pocket money was scarce and for many years my numismatic purchases were reckoned only in small change. It may seem curious to some, but I never collected by picking though U.S. coins for scarce dates as many Americans do. My earliest numismatic memory is of finding a small box in my parents' dresser drawer that contained a few dozen Indian-head cents that had probably been set aside by my father who'd arrived in the USA as an immigrant at age thirteen. I'm embarrassed to have to confess that the fate of this hoard was to be sequentially pilfered and spent surreptitiously to satisfy my early craving for penny candy. At about the same time, however, there was also another box of various minor coins of Europe mostly brought back from the recent war. These were among the earliest objects of my curiosity since, in those pre-TV days, they were things that had actually traveled to Brooklyn from that zone of mystery, "overseas." Their textual and graphic obscurity, general strangeness and, most importantly, their unspendability lured me onto a path that has ever since continued to enrich my life experience, engagement with the wider world. Foreign coins were particularly alluring because they conjured places and circumstances so far removed from my mundane obligations as a schoolboy who, as the child of upward striving immigrants, was expected to just keep his nose to the grindstone, to excel in his schoolwork in the here and now.

What might this have to do with books? Well, at first, nothing particularly numismatic, though early on I was also drawn to reading historical narratives—another habit which, like the foreign coin fascination was also, I now realize, escapist. When I was nine or ten years old, I received a holiday gift of a silver dollar, this at a time when my weekly allowance was a dime. I'd gotten such silver dollar gifts before—such coins were, after all, then available from every local bank, but to me back then they were just money, so each such gift was soon spent. This particular "dollar," however, couldn't be spent because the bank, possibly unwittingly, had stuck my grandfather, the gift-giver, with a 2 1/2 guilder coin of the Netherlands, whose obverse portrait of Queen Wilhelmina was sort of similar to the Liberty Head on a Barber Dollar. My parents when asked couldn't say exactly what this coin was, other than that it wasn't a real, spendable, dollar. Thus, for the first time in my numismatic life I craved specialized help and, since the concept of "coin dealer" had as yet neither entered my vocabulary nor my neighborhood, the local public library branch seven blocks away became my destination.

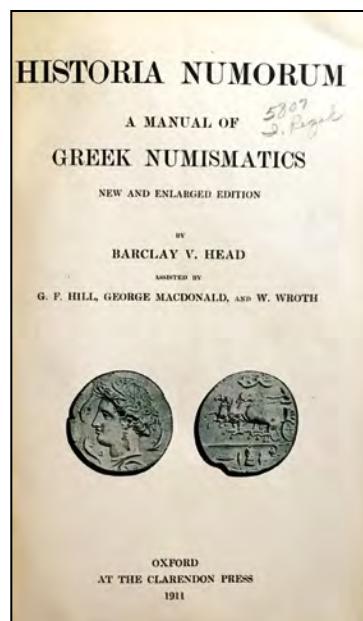
In our currently flush numismatic age, where every library, bookstore and newsstand offers a choice of coin catalogs, it may shock the reader to learn that my Brooklyn library branch c.1947 offered only two sources of numismatic information. One

was a minimally illustrated foreign coin price list of Alfred Szego, a dealer who, as it happened, dwelt in downtown Brooklyn, which was very far away in little boy terms. The other resource, however, was *Coins of the World: Twentieth Century Issues* by Wayte Raymond (fellow bibliomaniacs will forgive me for not recalling exactly which edition was available for consultation on this occasion, but of the five editions through 1954, it must have been the first edition of 1938 or the second of 1945). Beyond being adequate to the task at hand, this volume was a really exciting discovery for this budding numismatist since it not only offered lots of illustrations but also listed prices for each and every coin! Thus, I was not only able to identify and to learn the value of my Dutch "dollar" but likewise to learn something about all the other foreign coins in my box of minor European coins. Most thrillingly, I discovered that all my treasures had recognized values and, since my allowance was then only 10 cents a week, was impressed for the first time by the imagined worth of the twenty odd coins I then owned.

I would like to be able to report that from then on I eagerly sought out other numismatic bibliography or even resolved that in future I would "buy the book before the coin"; but that is not the case. First of all, no one in the neighborhood sold coin literature; but also at this early stage of my career the Raymond catalog seemed so rich a source that I returned over and over to its pages never even imagining that more information might lay beyond its covers. Then too, the primal urge to add coins to my proud new collection at the time was obviously the more exciting path to pursue. Nevertheless, I did use the library to look up in dictionaries and encyclopedias the exotic names and abbreviations in various languages that I found on coin-



*Coins of the World: Twentieth Century Issues*  
by Wayte Raymond



Barclay V. Head's *Historia Numorum*

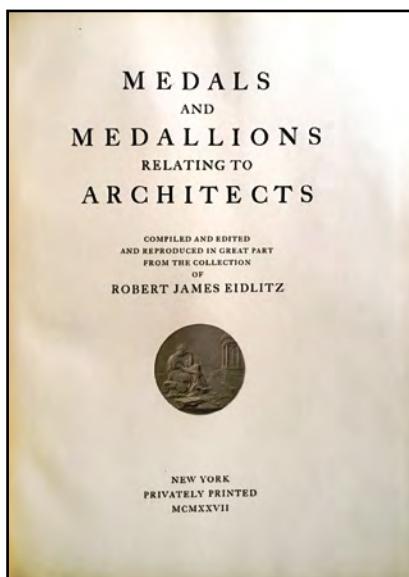
age. I guess this didn't strictly qualify as consulting numismatic literature, but to me deciphering D.G:BRIT:OMN:REX FID:DEF:IND:IMP or ОДИН РУБЛЬ, dates in the Hegira system or on Chinese coins, even ordinary French and German inscriptions, became adventures that I then saw and still regard as central to my numismatic experience. While still a child I began to transcribe such inscriptions onto the index cards that were the basis of my catalog system but, because my parents thought of my coin collection as a waste of time and money, I wanted to conceal the prices I'd paid for my specimens which I recorded on these cards. So, in another library I found in Barclay V. Head's *Historia Numorum* a table of pre-Latin alphabets and, thinking myself awfully clever, I adopted one of them, Oscan, as a secret system to encode my purchases.

By the time I was in high school I'd started to search in downtown Brooklyn, and even in Manhattan, for larger and more desirable coins. It's worth saying something about the New York numismatic scene I experienced back in the early 1950s. Where tall towers now stand on Sixth Avenue and along streets in the West 40s there then stood at least a dozen modest coin stores in an age when prices (as well as store rentals) were laughably low by today's standards; Gimbels at 34th Street also boasted a particularly rich numismatic selection. Brooklyn, too, had many small hobby shops as well as several large department stores each of which then had a coin department. I did not travel far enough "uptown" in those days to venture into Stack's or Kosoff's or New Netherlands. Fred Reinfeld's *Treasury of World Coins* (1953) was probably the first numismatic book I ever actually bought and while it wasn't useful for pricing it was much broader in scope than Raymond's 20th century catalog and also his 19th Century volume. It was in the 1950s too when I started to realize that for the price of a decent coin you could alternatively buy a medal that would usually be both larger in size as well as more complex in iconography and meaning. Books on medal collecting were then even less available than those dealing with coins, especially when foreign material was the focus of one's interest, so none entered my library or even my consciousness. Of course, I learned much later that grand volumes on Renaissance medals and catalogs of early collections of Dutch, English, Russian and French medals had been produced for decades, indeed for centuries, but back then, given the emporia I frequented and the modest sums available to me, such works were not even visible much less affordable.

So it was only in the mid 1950s after I'd entered Columbia College that I became aware of the scope of numismatic literature. Besides exploring the Butler Library at Columbia, which held an astonishing range of coin books old and new, I now roamed more freely among Manhattan's coin stores, bookstores and became acquainted with the numismatic riches at the New York Public Library. I also soon met Aaron Feldman who conducted a retail coin business in a tiny booth within a diamond exchange on Sixth Avenue and 47th Street. Aaron, who became a good friend and a mentor, was an American-born World War I veteran and who, like most numismatic dealers of the time in New York, focused primarily on United States numismatic materials. However, because he was on good terms with the major New York dealerships, was long acquainted with the older generation of New York area collectors, especially members of the long established New York Numismatic Club

and of the American Numismatic Society, he had had many opportunities to buy the type of material less likely to be sent to auction in those days, in particular older numismatic libraries. Thus the bookshelves in his private apartment provided the first time I had the opportunity to consider buying significant specialized numismatic literature. By then my foreign coin collecting had come to focus specifically on Russian material and I was able to acquire from Aaron such classic auction catalogs as those by the firm of Hess Nachfolger in Frankfurt offering the collections of Gustave Klingert (1910) and of Count Ivan Ivanovich Tolstoi (1913) as well as the rare catalog of Russian banknotes by Nikolai Ivanovich Kardakoff (Berlin 1953). In the medalllic sphere I acquired the massive work on *Medals of Architects* by Robert Eidlitz and the 1927 sale of Napoleonic series collected by the Prince d'Essling. Aaron Feldman also had for sale many continental European medals that contributed to my growing medical and Judaic collections, and a large selection of the presidential medals issued by the New York Numismatic Club whose meetings I started to attend and whose membership I've now enjoyed for more than half a century.

College for me involved pre-medical courses but also I studied ancient history, following a familiar path into the past which as a young coin collector I had already identified as a comfortable alternative to the present. To research a number of papers on antique coinage as part of my course work I soon needed to consult an entirely different range of numismatic literature. This resulted in my becoming a regular visitor, soon a habitue, then a member, and very much later a fellow of the American Numismatic Society. When I first dared to knock on the bronze doors of this august institution in order to consult its fabled library the head librarian was Richard Breaden. He, like Geoffrey North, Frank Campbell and several others thereafter, warmly welcomed me into the fellowship of numismatic bibliophiles. The Society and its library still remain resources to which I regularly turn, and which have indeed long served as a principal fulcrum for what I might call my career as a numismatist. I graduated from college in 1959, now sixty years ago, and of course besides research in libraries have since had many subsequent opportunities both to expand my personal numismatic library and to rue some missed opportunities to further enrich it during those earlier (and less expensive) days of the 1940s and 1950s. But, I've no cause to complain about these earliest years as a numismatic amateur; rather I'm grateful to have had so many opportunities, so soon and so happily, to enjoy the society of coins, medals, their literature and their collectors.



Medals of Architects by Robert Eidlitz

# The George Frederick Kolbe Award for Lifetime Achievement in Numismatic Literature: A Father-Son Collaboration

By Marc Ricard

While some of you know how I got started collecting numismatic literature, many of you don't know how NBS has impacted my life, and especially my relationship with my father. I have decided to tell the rest of the story for this very special edition of *The Asylum*.

As you know, we cannot choose our parents. But when you are lucky enough to be blessed with a mother and father that are generous, loving, and kind, your future is often bright. My sister and I are two very lucky kids. It is very true that people tend to understand and appreciate the value and impact of their relationship with a parent once that parent leaves this life. It takes time, but the memories can be much more meaningful if you shared the love of collecting together.

Growing up in a numismatic family, with multiple generations of service to the hobby, I was encouraged to try coin collecting. My early endeavors mirrored many of yours, and I still have one empty slot on the first page of my Lincoln Cent Board. But no matter how hard I tried, I could not focus in on a specific category to begin my collection. It was around that time that my father took me to an ANA Convention. I had been to several as a small child, when the bourse floor was a loud, intimidating space covered in a thick blanket of smoke. But I was a little older now, and my father's obsession started to make a bit more sense.

We walked up to a table and my father introduced me to George Kolbe. I found it strange that Mr. Kolbe didn't have a single coin or medal in his case. Then, he took a very old book with a beautiful leather cover and told me that the history and secrets of the coins and medals that I had seen on our dining room table, were held in a book just like this one. The engravings made the medals come to life, and from that moment on I knew I had found my collecting niche, which I have enjoyed for over 30 years.

I joined my fellow bibliomaniacs in the NBS and eventually had the privilege of serving two terms as President. And now for the rest of the story...I was honored to have a Board of Trustees at NBS that included many of the giants of numismatic liter-





NBS Treasurer David Sundman presented the first George Frederick Kolbe Medal for Lifetime Achievement in Numismatic Literature to George Frederick Kolbe while Marc Ricard applauds.

ature. They were my heroes, but they were all getting a bit older, and sometimes wiser. The idea and existence of Lifetime Achievement Award for the NBS had been around in different iterations since the Society was founded. However, that actual award in a tangible form did not exist. Other clubs, societies, and associations have long histories of honoring the finest and most deserving of their members with a physical representation of their achievements. I approached my father, a medal collector and decedent of French medal engravers, to help me design a medal for the NBS.

With several design ideas littering our kitchen floor, we finally took a break and thought about what collecting numismatic literature really meant to us. The power of the historical context, and how each example fit into some part of the human experience. And if this was to be for a lifetime of achievement in the collecting, sales, and long-term preservation of these treasures, who would be deserving of such recognition? What would we call it, and what should it say?

The George Frederick Kolbe Award for Lifetime Achievement in Numismatic Literature is the result of our collaboration. The experience of designing that medal, and holding the result in our own hands, is a priceless gift that brought our worlds together. A bit of both of us lives on in that medal. But most importantly, our Society gave me the opportunity to honor our heroes, and to have an eternal bond with mine.



# NBS Friendships

By P. Scott Rubin

I have no idea of when I joined NBS but I do know that at the time of the first issue of *The Asylum* I was already a member and one of the people I was in almost constant communication with was co-founder of NBS, Jack Collins.

I remember at the Invasion of Louisville in 1988 I asked Armand Champa, who at the time was the President of NBS, if he would support me if I ran for the board of NBS. His reply was that he would if I made it a point to attend the annual ANA conventions where the board had its meetings.

I ran for the board the next year and still have the form letter from Secretary/Treasurer John Bergman telling me I had won a position on the board starting in August, 1989. A lot of things happened in the next two years in NBS, not all of it good. But by the next election I was elected president of NBS.

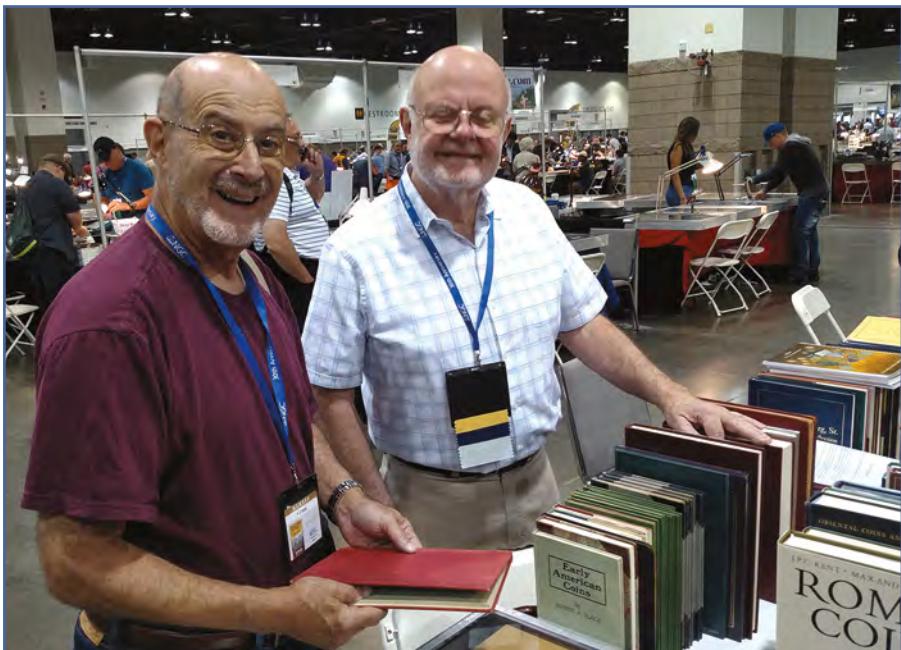
The biggest problem with NBS at the time as it had been since its beginning was to making sure *The Asylum* was produced on a timely fashion. Without going into details, the editor of *The Asylum* was having problems with the printer. This caused a number of other problems that had to be dealt with. So the board and I had to handle them. This led to a number of different editors during my term as president. At the end of my term George Kolbe was back as editor for a short time to help us out and Joel Orosz was in place since 1993 as the historian of NBS.

The most memorable part of my being on the board of NBS from 1989 until 2017 was the friendships I developed over those years. The most important were with the two co-founders Jack Collins and George Kolbe. I knew Jack because of interest in early U.S. copper coinage and his work with Walter Breen on his half cent book. Jack was one of the funniest people I ever met and his stories were unreal. He once told me how he had helped Jonathan Winters get his start in TV and the story of Mr. Winters coming into Abner Kreisberg's coin store one day to visit, and on leaving spent about a half hour entertaining construction workers doing work outside the store. It was stories like this and his vast knowledge of numismatic history that kept me talking to him on at least a weekly basis for years until his death. I would talk to him at the hospital even during his sometimes lengthy stays. This brings back the story of after one of his hospital stays he returned home to find all his dishes missing. After asking his neighbor if he saw anybody break into his house the neighbor told him he did not think he was going to survive this last hospital visit and had helped himself to the dishes—he immediately returned them. In all the time I knew Jack I think we only were in each other's company less the twenty times maybe as few as ten, because I lived in New Jersey and he lived in California.

My friendship with George Kolbe grew entirely from numismatic literature; I spent more time with George than Jack mainly because George and I have outlived Jack. Also, because we would on a number of occasions share a room at ANA conventions. While I never visited Jack's house I was honored to be invited along with my wife and daughter to stay overnight at George and Linda Kolbe's in Crestline, and

consider that one of my fondest numismatic memories.

To this day George is one of the two numismatic friends I keep in touch with frequently.



Scott Rubin with George Kolbe at the ANA in 2017.



The annual meeting 1993 Board shot, left to right: Fred Lake, Joel J. Orosz, Wayne Homren, Frank Van Zandt, P. Scott Rubin at lectern, Charles Davis and Michael Sullivan.

# Every Professional Numismatist Needs a Library

By Shanna Schmidt

I'm a relatively new member of the NBS, however I have gained so much by being involved. I started my "relationship" with *The Asylum* when Maria Fanning contacted me while I was still working at my father's firm, Harlan J. Berk Ltd. Maria, as a new editor of *The Asylum* wanted to see more women contributing. As there are so very few of us that are even involved in the business aside from peripheral work, I found this offer very enticing. Thus began my involvement as a contributor to the magazine. I wrote a series of articles and was even honored to win an award for the contribution as a first time author for my piece on the Harlan J. Berk Ltd. Numismatic Library.

My love of books started long before joining the NBS. When I started working full time as a professional numismatist in 2005, I could hardly refer to myself as one. Books were my entry into this wonderful new world. Working at a small place, no one really had the time to teach me about coins. Sure, I would get the passing words of wisdom from my father but that didn't take me very far. I remember what cemented my passion for numismatics and thus books. My father acquired a rather large group of Alexander the Great tetradrachms and came into my office declaring "okay...attribute all these." At first I had no idea where to begin. He marched back in with the two large volumes of Martin Price's monumental study on the coinage of Alexander. From that point and moving forward I worked several weeks determining what symbols went with what mints and thus could properly attribute the several hundred coins I was given. I can honestly say that this was the point where it just clicked how important books were in the numismatic world. As an aside, a result of this exercise is that I'm pretty darn good at attributing coins from Alexander.

As I started to use the library more at the office to attribute new acquisitions I became aware that reference books were increasingly difficult to find without asking my father. Like a lot of coin dealers, my father worked best in an environment that he created to his liking. What worked best for him however didn't work at all for me. We also had an entire upstairs storage area filled with old catalogs that were all out of order. In addition, we were missing many of the newest titles. Since I was just starting to get comfortable in my role as a numismatist I decided that this was the best way to contribute to the firm and to my future at the company. I aimed to get the best numismatic library for ancients in the U.S. I started by working with all the great book dealers out there. Folks like Charles Davis, Philip Skingley, Douglas Saville, George Kolbe, David Fanning, Paul-Francis Jacquier and finally the late John Burns. I remember walking into the shows and making a beeline for their stacks of books. I would buy hundreds of dollars worth of books and have them shipped back to the office. At the office I started the long process of putting all the books in some semblance of order. This was not especially embraced by all in the office and I under-



View of the reading room at the new HJB Ltd. Numismatic Library

stand why. I was shaking up their world.

After several years of acquisition, order and cleanup of unwanted or unnecessary books and catalogs, I did the next reasonable thing. I contacted my friends at the Regenstein Library at my alma mater The University of Chicago (where I had recently finished up a three-year program getting my Master's degree). I worked with them to create a library database of our titles and their books. This partnership was a way to open up the entire gamut of books to both the University of Chicago students and our customers.

Unfortunately, life sometimes gets in the way and I decided in 2015 to leave my job and work as an independent numismatist. I left the cozy library that I helped to create and started working out of my home with no library. The first half year was the most difficult. I truly believe that every professional numismatist needs a library—the internet just doesn't cut it. So many titles are not available online and having a good library particularly for ancients is still immensely important. With the help of a very good customer/friend of mine and my own proceeds from auction representation (my main source of income) I have been in the process of getting my own numismatic library. To date, I have over 650 books or sets. It hasn't been easy but it is extremely gratifying.

I finally got around to joining the NBS and, to be frank, I should have done it far sooner. I'm not able to attend many meetings because they typically take place at the same as the trade shows at which I am supposed to be exhibiting. That said, I think being a member of the NBS and contributor to *The Asylum* has influenced my entire relationship with numismatics. It saved me at the beginning from being bored at an office where I hadn't yet found my place, and it continues to serve me by equipping me with the knowledge I need to be the best numismatist I can be. Congratulations to ALL at the NBS and *The Asylum*!!



# NBS Charter Members

By Pete Smith

On the occasion of the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Numismatic Bibliomania Society, we look back at those charter members who got us started. A list of charter members has survived in the archives of the NBS Historian. However, it is not without controversy and has not been previously published. This article will provide some background to the list and attempt to track what has happened with those charter members. In the case of Harry Bass, Q. David Bowers, Walter Breen, John J. Ford and Eric P. Newman, they are prominent names in numismatics. Others are less well known and there may be very limited information available.

An organizational meeting and dinner was held during the 1979 ANA convention in St. Louis. About a dozen interested people attended. They included Jack Collins, George Kolbe, Q. David Bowers, Keith Kelman, Denis Loring, and Jesse Patrick. Others may have included John Bergman, Armand Champa, Jon Hanson, and Cal Wilson.

In the early days membership was not tied to a calendar year, but rather to each published volume of *The Asylum*. During the period of 1980-81, four numbers of *The Asylum* were published in three issues. About 75 members were on the roles by the end of 1981.

In November 1982 a meeting was held in Mission Viejo, California, with John Bergman, George Kolbe, Alan Meghrig, Austin Ryer, Bob Vick, and Cal Wilson in attendance. Plans were set to draft By-Laws to present to the membership early in 1983. Article III, Section 4 stated, "All members in good standing as of January 1, 1983 shall be Charter Members of the society."

*Coin World* reported in the August 3, 1983, issue, "The first board of governors was elected in February of this year, the constitution and by-laws were adopted, and the first 40 members of the society were accepted as charter members." No list of the first 40 members is known to survive.

With one issue in 1982, another in 1983, and two issues in 1984, it took three years to publish the second volume of *The Asylum* and membership renewal should not have been required. In November of 1982, Cal Wilson reported that NBS membership was nearly 300 bibliophiles. If there were 300 members in November 1982 and members on January 1, 1983, became charter members, it would appear that there should have been more than 40 charter members reported in 1983 or the 86 names that appear on the later, undated charter member list.

Linda Kolbe was secretary during 1979 to 1987. [She is not listed as a charter member.] George F. Kolbe believes that Cal Wilson compiled the list of Charter Members. NBS Historian Joel Orosz has two card files with the names of early members and records of dues payments. In some cases these cards cannot confirm the charter memberships. There must have been another set of membership records that are not preserved in the files of the Historian.

## Bibliomaniacs converge on Cincinnati show

"More fine books in numismatics have been published in the past 20 years than in the last century," John J. Ford Jr. declared as he advocated the collection of numismatic books as an avenue to concentrate knowledge before an audience of over 100 numismatic bibliophiles during the recent American Numismatic Association convention in Cincinnati.

Ford, a collector, scholar, researcher and professional, was the speaker at the evening at the meeting of the newly formed Numismatic Bibliomaniacs Society.

George F. Kolbe, Mission Viejo, Calif., co-editor of *The Asylum*, the quarterly journal of the society, was chairman of the meeting and introduced Ford. Jack Collins, co-editor with Kolbe, was present but soon excused himself by illness.

"Books are familiar with numismatic books and their contents; you know where to look for information," Ford said.

Ford cited Harry W. Bass Jr., a noted numismatic bibliophile in the audience, as one of the few prominent collectors who collects books with a passion, and who is seriously interested in numismatic literature.

The speaker told the audience which represented nearly everyone in the numismatic library, Australia, that a good library also includes related materials, such as photographs, documents and letters as additive to the study of numismatics and its requirements of minute attention to detail.

Collect books to have access to the knowledge they contain," Ford urged as he gave examples of his own preferences and of book collecting, the fascination of acquiring books with duplicates of famous collectors and dealers, unusual bindings, or even the care and nature of fine numismatic books wascribed

and related incidents from colorful yesteryears involving fa-



John J. Ford Jr.



George F. Kolbe

The following are listed with their membership numbers.

**1. Jack Collins** had an early career as a television associate producer and as a bar owner. In his later career he was a coin dealer, coin photographer, and auction cataloger. He issued auction catalogs in 1983 and 1987 and a fabulous fixed price list of Washingtonia in 1991. NBS named him an Honorary Life Member but he died on September 27, 1996. [Born 1939] George Kolbe wrote, "Some of us march to our own drummer; Jack Collins had his own orchestra."

**2. George Kolbe** was co-founder of the NBS and served as president from summer 1985 until summer 1987. He attended Loyola University and worked in management for retail grocers. He was a part time literature dealer in 1967 and went full time in 1980. Kolbe sold the finest numismatic libraries ever formed (Adams, Bass, Ford) and entered in a partnership with David Fanning to form Kolbe and Fanning Numismatic Booksellers. In 1988 he was designated an NBS Honorary Life Member. He is an active NBS member in 2019.

**3. Reserved** [There is no published explanation for the reserved membership numbers]

**4. Reserved**

**5. Reserved**

**6. Reserved**

**7. Reserved**

**8. Reserved**

**9. Reserved**

**10. Reserved**

**11. Reserved**

**12. Reserved**

**13. Reserved**

**14. Cal Wilson** was employed as a manager of production planning for Continental Can Company. He was the first NBS President and served from January 1982 until the ANA convention in 1985. He published *Wilson's Numismatic Repository*

from 1982 until 1988 and conducted 18 auctions of numismatic literature from 1981 to 1988. In financial difficulty, he withdrew from active participation in the numismatic community, and offered early NBS records for sale on eBay. Fortunately they were purchased and donated to the Society's archives. Wilson died on October 12, 2018, at age 74.

**15. John W. Adams** is a retired investment banker living in the Boston area in 2019. He served as NBS vice president from summer 2001 until summer 2005. After a two year break, he served as president from summer 2007 until summer 2009. He was editor of the Quarterman reprint of Attinelli's *Numisgraphics*. His two-volume work on *United States Numismatic Literature* was an influential resource for the study of auction catalogs with Volume I published in 1982 and Volume II published in 1991.

**16. The name of Richard Bass** appears on the list of Charter members. Later membership lists give the name as **Richard A. Bagg**, an employee of Bowers and Merena. He graduated from the State University of New York and received a Ph.D. from the University of New Hampshire. He was auction director for Bowers and Merena and later Stack's. He died on December 31, 2018.

**17. Howard S. Baron** was in the knit goods business in New York City. He collected books about paper money and counterfeit detectors. His brother Larry was a stamp dealer. With his son Fred he formed High Ridge Books in 1983. The company focus changed to 19<sup>th</sup> century history and maps. His name does not appear on the first NBS membership list published in 1985. He died on January 25, 1999, at age 86. His son still runs High Ridge Books in 2019.

**18. Harry W. Bass, Jr.** was a Texas oilman and owner of a Vail ski resort. He served as president of the ANS 1978 to 1984. He died on April 4, 1998 at age 71 and was inducted that year into the ANA Hall of Fame. In the 1990s, he was moderator of a pioneering numismatic literature listserve, BIBLIONUMIS-l. His numismatic library with more than 10,000 items, was sold at auction by George Kolbe in 1999-2001.

**19. J. Richard Becker** was a resident of Acton Centre, Massachusetts, and a specialist in Canadian numismatics. He served as president of the Canadian Paper Money Society 1985 to 1987. Author of *The Decimal Coinage of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island* (1975). He is a Life Member of NBS.

**20. John Bergman** served as NBS Secretary/Treasurer from 1988 until 1991. He was a numismatic literature dealer until his death on October 18, 2000 at age 56. Bergman was in charge of the first NBS convention held in Long Beach in 1983. His article on how to pack numismatic books is frequently reprinted. His grave marker indicates that he was a sheet metal worker and a numismatic bookseller. His library



Cal Wilson at Long Beach in 1983

was sold at auction by Kolbe in 2001-02.

**21. Mary Bergman** was the wife of John Bergman. She served on the board of the Long Beach Coin Club in 1983 to 1997. GFK reported that she re-married.

**22. Henry Bergos** was a resident of Brooklyn and later Calhoun, Georgia. He was a frequent contributor to *The E-Sylum*. In one letter he mentions having a fabric store. He died in 2013. His wife died later that year. There was an obituary and burial records for her but none found for him.

**23. Hedley Betts** was a dealer in world medals on Regent Street in London. He moved to America with his American wife. After receiving a master's degree in clinical psychology, he worked in Santa Clara County's Health and Hospital system. He continues to deal in world medals from his home office in 2019.

**24. Del Bland** graduated from San Jose State in 1956. He was a coin dealer who specialized in the study of large cent pedigrees. He identified cents switched out of the collection of the American Numismatic Society (ANS). In October 2006 the ANS acquired Bland's correspondence file including more than 2000 letters exchanged between 1970 and 2005. The Kolbe & Fanning mail bid sale of July 18, 2013, included selections from the Del Bland library. He died on October 16, 2018, just short of his 85<sup>th</sup> birthday.

**25. Michael Bourne** was the youngest charter member of the NBS at age 17. With his sister, he operated Michael and Marlene Bourne Rare Numismatic Literature while attending the University of Minnesota. In 1988 he graduated from the California College of Podiatric Medicine and works as a podiatrist in Stillwater, Minnesota. He maintains the collection of numismatic periodicals and continues to add to the collection of patterns originated by his father. He remains an active NBS member in 2019.

**26. Remy Bourne** was owner of an advertising business. He served on the NBS board in 1983 and as vice president from summer 1987 until summer 1989. He then served as president for three months in 1989 and resigned. Between 1988 and 1990 he published four volumes on dealer fixed price and premium paid for lists. He began issuing fixed price lists of literature in July 1994. In 1995 he expanded into auction sales. Bourne served on the ANA board from 2001 to 2007. Since 1985 he and his wife Avis have traveled to 118 countries. He is alive and well in 2019.

**27. Bowers & Merena Galleries** was listed as a charter member. In later membership lists, Q. David Bowers is listed as member #27. In 2019 he is writing his autobiography.

**28. Walter Breen** was employed as a researcher by Wayne Raymond. He wrote many articles and books on American numismatics. Both his research in the National Archives and his tendency to speculate without corroborating evidence were prodigious. He was convicted of child molestation and died in prison in April 1993 at age 62.

**29. Kirby W. Brown, Ph.D.** was a resident of Stockton, Paradise, and later Manteca, California. As an entomologist, he studied beetles and as a bibliophile he studied books with embossed coin illustrations. His library was sold by Kolbe in 2010. [Born 1940]

**30. Mike Carter** graduated from the University of Florida in Gainesville and

worked in retail sales. In the early 1980s he wrote a book and articles specializing in currency. Superior Stamp & Coin hired him for retail sales and he also did cataloguing from 1980 to 1985. He sold his first library in 1987 when a telemarketing job brought him to Minnesota. There he opened a brick and mortar coin shop in 1989. Crystal Coins & Collectibles specializes in collectible pens in 2019. He still has some classic references in fine bindings.

**31. Armand Champa** dropped out of school to work at a roller rink. At one time he owned nine roller skating rinks and assembled one of the great numismatic libraries. He served as vice president of NBS from January 1983 until summer of 1987 and then as president of NBS from summer 1987 until summer 1989. He hosted a tour of his library during the 1988 ANA convention. This has become known as “The Invasion of Louisville.” He died on March 5, 1997, at age 75. The Armand Champa Library filled four sales by Bowers and Merena in 1994-95.

**32. Brian G. Dobbins** is a resident of Scottsdale, Arizona, where he is a financial advisor. He married Susan Ford, daughter of John J. Ford. The Brian Dobbins collection of Political Tokens was sold at auction by Stack's / Bowers in March, 2018. [Born 1948]

**33. John J. Ford Jr.** served with the Army Signal Corp during WWII and Army counter intelligence after the war. He conducted eight auction sales under his name 1941 to 1950. Then he was employed by New Netherlands 1951 to 1991. He is remembered for speaking to the NBS meeting in 1980 with more than 100 interested people attending, and also for his legendary feud with Eric P. Newman. He died on July 7, 2005, at age 81. His collection was sold in a series of auctions by Stack's. His library was sold by Kolbe in 2004-05. After his death he lost credibility over the sale of false gold bars.

**34. Mark E. Freehill** was sales representative for Spink in Australia. He served as president of the Australian Numismatic Society and the Sydney chapter of the International Bank Note Society. He was first vice president of I.B.S.N. and made frequent reports to the *I.B.S.N. Journal* as “Paper Money World.”

**35. Myles Z. Gerson** served during World War II. He was vice president of Navaho Freight Lines and was with Allied Tube and Conduit until retirement in 1982. He was a collector of Conder Tokens and 1794 large cents. He died on May 31, 1986, at age 60.

**36. Carling Gresham** retired from the Army with twenty years service in 1970. In 1972 he was appointed director of numismatic services for Jacques Cartier mint. He served on the board of NBS from 1984 to 1991 and as the always controversial editor of *The Asylum* 1984 to 1986. He sold historical paper through Carling's of Florida. He died January 28, 2008, at age 81.

**37. Reed Hawn** was owner of Hawn Arabians horse ranch with investments in gas and oil. His coin collection included a 1913 Liberty nickel and an 1804 dollar sold by Stack's in 1993. His name is not on the 1985 membership list. He served on the U.S. Mint Citizens Commemorative Coin Advisory Committee. [Born 1949]

**38. Malcolm Heinmiller** was a resident of Pasadena and Laguna Hills, California. His name is not on the 1985 membership list. [This may have been Percival Malcolm Heinmiller 1905-1984.]

**39. Al Hoch (Alfred E. Hoch)** was a book publisher with Quarterman Publica-

tions, specializing in high-quality reprints of classic numismatic references. He graduated from MIT in 1957 with a degree in Mechanical Engineering. Then he worked at Draper Laboratory in Cambridge with involvement in the Apollo Project and navigation systems for Polaris missiles. He was also an authority on vintage posters and antique paper Americana. He died on November 25, 2000, at age 75.

**40. Ronald Horstman** was employed with the St. Louis Water Department. He was a currency dealer and past president of the Society of Paper Money Collectors and of the Leslie Numismatic Society in the St. Louis area. His collecting specialty was St. Louis national bank notes.

[Born 1935]

**41. (Dr.) Douglas Hunter** was a resident of Scarborough, Ontario, Canada. He was vice president of the Latin American Paper Money Society (LANSA). He died on January 20, 2019, at age 83.

**42. Byron F. Johnson Jr.** was a pharmacist in Seattle. He served as president of the Token and Medal Society (TAMS) in 1972 to 1974. He served on the U.S. Assay Commission in 1971 and served on the ANA board in 1975 to 1977. At the same time he was president of the Organization of International Numismatists. He died on June 14, 1988, at age 57. His collection was sold at auction by Bowers & Merena in 1989. In 2016 he was inducted into the ANA Hall of Fame.

**43. N. Bradford Johnson** is listed as a consignor to Kolbe's sale of June 5, 1992. He does not appear on the NBS membership list for 1985. [Likely Nicholas Bradford Johnson of Lynn, MA]

**44. Geneva R. Karlson** graduated from Eastern Michigan University. During WWII she worked at the Ford Willow Run plant. She served as ANA librarian from 1967 until 1978 and then was elected to the board of governors for two years. She died on September 16, 2003, at age 86.

**45. Keith N. Kelman** was a dealer with Paramount (1975), Kelman and Associates (1976); Essex Numismatic Properties (1977), K. Nathan Galleries (1978) and was a grader for PCGS 1987-1992. He was author of *Standing Liberty Quarters*. In 1986 he sold what he described as the "finest quality sets of American coin reference books ever assembled" to Dan Hamelberg. In 1992 he reopened K. Nathan Galleries dealing in early California paintings and quality art. He is co-founder of KelmanOrtiz Fine Frame Makers producing hand carved gold leaf frames.

**46. Robert F. Kriz** graduated from Chicago-Kent College of Law and was admit-



George Kolbe at Long Beach in 1983

ted to the bar in 1940. During WWII and the Korean War he served as a colonel. Afterward he worked in logistics at the Marshall Space Flight Center and the Kennedy Space Center until 1972. His exhibit of British Sovereigns was awarded the Howland Wood Best-in-Show award in 1985. He then served as ANA Chief Judge. He died on September 16, 1995, at age 80.

**47. Richard E. Lane** is a resident of Bellingham, Washington. For 36 years he was in the paper making business and had a small farm raising horses. He was a member of the American Tax Token Society and has thousands of tax tokens. He is alive and well at age 75 in 2019.

**48. Joseph R. Lasser** served with the Army Air Corps during WWII and flew 41 missions over Europe. He was employed as a securities analyst, stockbroker and portfolio manager. His collection of Colonial coins and currency was donated to Colonial Williamsburg Foundation. He died on January 17, 2011, at age 87.

**49. Joseph Lepczyk** received a B.A. and M.A. from Michigan State University and served with the military in Korea. He was employed by the State of Michigan as a community developer. He conducted 64 auctions between 1972 and 1985. In financial difficulty, he died of an apparent suicide on June 11, 1985 at age 44.

**50. Marvin Lessen** graduated from the Moore School of Electrical Engineering at the University of Pennsylvania. He worked in the aerospace and defense industry. While working in England he developed an interest and collection of British coins. He remains an active member in 2019. [Born 1934]

**51. H. Joseph Levine** was schooled as a tax lawyer and spent four years as Assistant Professor of Business Law at the American University in Washington, D.C. He then incorporated Presidential Coin and Antique Co. in 1968 and has been in business ever since. The firm specializes in tokens, medals and political items and has conducted over 75 well-received auction catalogs in these specialized fields. He was President and a board member of the Token and Medal Society; legal counsel for the Civil War Token Society; a member of seven different Official Presidential Inaugural Medal Committees and the author of *Collectors Guide to Presidential Inaugural Medals* (1981).

**52. Denis W. Loring** is a Fellow of the Society of Actuaries. He was Senior Vice



First Regional NBS Convention in Long Beach, California on Feb. 19, 1983. Standing, left to right: Hendrik De Jager, George Kolbe, Bob Vick, Chuck Peterson, Steve Tanenbaum, Mary Bergman, John Bergman, Jim Matthews?, Mike Carter, Alan Meghrig. Sitting, left to right: Dan Demeo, Walter Breen, Linda Kolbe, Jack Collins, Cal Wilson, Armand Champa, Kay Champa

President of Equitable Life Assurance 1981 to 1998 and Senior Vice President of RGA Reinsurance 1998 to 2012. He is a specialist in U.S. large cents and remains active in 2019.

**53. Jack M. Mantell** was a doctor from Milwaukee living in Springfield, Missouri, and later Layton, Utah. At age 81 in 2019, he is living but inactive in the hobby.

**54. Harrington E. Manville** was employed in the U.S. diplomatic service until retirement in 1980. He compiled the *Encyclopedia of British Numismatics* published in six volumes between 1986 and 2014. His library weighing more than two tons was sold via Douglas Saville. He died on February 18, 2015, at age 85.

**55. Alan Meghrig** was a close friend of Jack Collins and George Kolbe. He is the only person to hold the position of NBS Treasurer, a role he played from 1983 to 1987. He contributed to *The Washington Pattern Coinage of Peter Getz* published in 2009. Alan had a massive library with parts sold at auction by Kolbe in 2006-07. He is still living in 2019.

**56. Eric Moore** was a resident of Orange, California. He collected Bermuda paper money. He was a life member of the International Bank Note Society.

**57. Eric P. Newman** graduated from Washington University Law School and began to practice law in 1935. He worked with the family firm of Edison Brothers. He was a prolific author of books and articles on numismatics. He died at age 106 on November 15, 2017.

Eric endowed the Newman Numismatic Portal as a resource for all interested numismatists. The Newman Money Museum, originally at the Mercantile Bank and later at the Kemper Art Museum, closed in April 2018. Highlights from the Newman library were sold by Heritage in November 2018.

**58. George A. Nicholson** was a resident of Dunedin Beach, Florida. He collected paper money specializing in Florida nationals. He died January 22, 1992, at age 81.

**59. Joel J. Orosz** received a Ph.D. from Case Western University. He worked for the W. K. Kellogg Foundation 1986 to 2001 and was Distinguished Professor of Philanthropic Studies at Grand Valley State University until retirement in 2010. He was editor of *The Asylum* 1986 to 1988. After 1993 he served as Historian for the NBS. His library features a specialty in antebellum numismatics. *Coin World* features his monthly column on numismatic literature. He is a Life member of NBS. After 2011, the NBS award for best writer in *The Asylum* is named in Joel's honor.

**60. Jesse Patrick** is a coin dealer from the San Francisco Bay Area who began the The Patrick Mint in 1972 by pioneering the silver art bar market. Between 1976 and 1979 he produced a series of over 1341 different small size bronze tokens about penny size. In recent times The Patrick Mint marketed 28 mm products, primarily tokens, in different compositions and platings. Any ability to continue minting was lost in the Tubbs fire of October 9, 2017, along with his home, very substantial quantities of minted products and large library which included a very extensive collection of early plated American auction catalogues.

**61. Donald Pfau** was a resident of Orchard Lake, Michigan. He served on the NBS board from Summer 1984 to Summer 1985. His name does not appear on the first NBS membership list published in 1985. His library was included in a 1992 mail bid sale by Money Tree.

**62. Richard Picker** served in the Army during WWII. He was a dealer in Colonial and Early American coins. When he joined NBS he wrote, "I'll be happy to be counted as one of the nuts added into the fruitcake." He died on February 1, 1983, one month after becoming a charter member. Selections from the Picker library were sold at auction by Kolbe in 1984.

**63. J. Roy Pennell, Jr.** received an engineering degree from Clemson University and served in the Civil Engineering Corps during WWII and the Korean Conflict. He served on the U.S. Assay Commission in 1969. He was president of the Society of Paper Money Collectors 1971 to 1979. He died on June 17, 2008, at age 84. His library was sold by Kolbe in June 1996.

**64. Don Prybyzerski** was a resident of Patchogue, New York. He specialized in Civil War Tokens and wrote about the Eastman National Business College. [Born 1941]

**65. Richard V. Punchard** was a heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) contractor until retirement. He collected auction catalogs and classic references to support his interest in collecting U.S. large cents. His library was sold at auction by Remy Bourne in 1997. He is still living and collecting in 2019.

Punchard was a mentor to Pete Smith in the collection of large cents and numismatic literature. They traveled to several EAC conventions and to California auctions together.

**66. Philip W. Ralls** graduated from UCLA Medical School and worked in radiology at the University of Southern California. He collected large cents and hosted gatherings for collectors during some of the California auctions. He died on September 23, 2012, at age 64.

**67. Margo Russell** joined the staff of *Coin World* in 1960 and she rose to the position of editor in 1962. Public service included the Assay Commission in 1964 and the American Revolution Bicentennial Commission Coins and Medals Advisory panel in 1970 and service as chairman in 1972. In 1986 she was inducted into the ANA Numismatic Hall of Fame. Selections from her library were sold by Kolbe & Fanning in 2015. She died on January 26, 2015, at age 95.

**68. Austin Ryer (Jr.)** graduated from the University of New Mexico and worked for Douglas Aircraft Co. on the design of ejection seats. He was treasurer and bourse chairman for the Numismatic Society of Southern California. In 1982 he was nominated to be NBS convention chairman but he did not run the 1983 NBS convention. His name did not appear on the 1985 membership list. He apparently died between 1987 and 1989. His library was sold by Kolbe on February 2, 1990.

**69. Vacant** [no explanation]

**70. David J. Sklow** served in the U.S. Air Force, 1966 to 1988. From 1983 to 1988 and 1998 to 2015 he was a numismatic literature dealer. He has served as ANA Historian, ANA Secretary, and Library Director. He is an expert on ANA membership badges. He is a Life Member of NBS.

**71. William F. Spengler** served in the Army during WWII. He was the author of *The Standard Guide to Asian Coins and Paper Money*. His 1988 exhibit won the Howland Wood Best-in-Show award. He died in Colorado Springs on November 8, 2005, at age 82.



Jack Collins and Walter Breen at Long Beach in 1983

**72. Elizabeth Steinle** was born as Elizabeth Lord Wentzell and was married to Edmund C. Steinle. She was a teacher at Spring Hill Junior High in South Charleston, West Virginia, and an award-winning researcher and writer. Member of the Kanawha Coin Club. She died on January 19, 1995, at age 66.

**73. Alfred Szego** was a struggling television repair man who accepted a group of foreign coins in exchange for services. This kindled an interest in numismatics. His scholarship included publication of *The Coinage of Medieval Austria 1156-1521*. While some bibliomaniacs may be nuts, Szego was a nut breeder, specializing in American chestnuts. He died on September 1, 1991, at age 77. His library was sold at auction by Kolbe in three sales in 1992-93.

**74. Steven L Tanenbaum** graduated from Cornell University and received an MBA from MIT. He was a financial analyst with Xerox Corporation. In 1981 he became a full time dealer in tokens and medals. On February 11, 2011, he was crossing a street in Brooklyn when he was struck and killed by a fleeing spree killer.

**75. Barry D. Tayman** is a retired attorney from the General Counsel's Office of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. He serves as the Treasurer of the Medal Collectors of America. His interest in numismatic literature began with a box of Canadian tokens purchased from a local coin dealer for 25 cents each. When the standard reference proved inadequate, his search for numismatic literature began in earnest, which led to the acquisition of a significant numismatic library, and related historical

references. He was fortunate early on, to be mentored by the late Dr. George Fuld, and acquired Dr. Fuld's Canadian numismatic library. With mentoring by lifelong friends Warren Baker and John W. Adams, his interests branched out to Betts medals, Comitia Americana medals, and Indian Peace medals. He was elected a Fellow of the ANS in 1995. He remains active in 2019.

**76. Anthony Terranova** worked briefly in the commodities market before becoming a coin dealer in 1977 specializing in early American coins and medals. He received the Farran Zerbe Memorial Award from the ANA in 2011. He is a Life Member of NBS.

**77. Frederick G. "Fritz" Weber** was a coin dealer in Emmaus, Pennsylvania, and one of the founders of the New York International Numismatic Conventions. He worked for First Coinvesters, Inc. as director of their Colonial coin program. He does not appear on the first NBS membership list published in 1985. [Born 1942]

**78. William R. Weber** joined the Navy in April 1941 and became a flight instructor in 1945. He worked for Western California Telephone Company until retirement in 1979. His collection of half cents was considered the finest to come on auction for some time. He died on June 23, 2003, at age 84

**79. Robert I. Wester** was a resident of Suncook, New Hampshire. He did research on Sylvester Sage Crosby that was published in *The Asylum*. He died on May 27, 2003, at age 65.

**80. Gene Wilkin** was a resident of San Juan Capistrano, California, and a member of EAC and N.A.S.C. His name does not appear on the 1985 membership list.

**81. Raymond H. Williamson** was employed with General Electric. He served on the United States Assay Commission in 1968. He was a collector of U.S. large cents, an active member of Early American Coppers, and a careful researcher who published several well-sourced articles. He died on December 13, 1997, at age 90.

**82. Vacant** [no explanation]

**83. John W. Wilson** served with the U.S. Marine Corps 1962 to 1966. He was a Milwaukee deputy sheriff until retirement to Florida. He served as president of Central States in 1996 to 1998 and the ANA 2001 to 2003. John and his wife Nancy are ambassadors for the ANA at many coin conventions. They celebrated their 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary in April 2018. John is still an active NBS member in 2019.

**84. William H. Wilt** was a resident of Altoona, Pennsylvania. He was active with Early American Coppers in the 1970s. Frank Katen sold selections from the William H. Wilt library on February 1, 1986.

**85. Douglas A. Winter** reports on his website that he began to collect coins at the age of seven, was buying and selling at age ten, joined the ANA at age thirteen and had a show table before the age of fourteen. He won a literary award as a young numismatist and continued to write books as an adult. He was the second youngest member to join NBS. His firm, Douglas Winter Numismatics specializes in choice and rare U.S. gold coins. The Doug Winter Library was sold by Cal Wilson in 1986. [Born 1959]

**86. Randolph Zander** became a coin dealer in 1930 and served as president of the Organization of International Numismatists. Both *The Numismatist* and *The Asylum* benefited from his frequent articles. Selections from his library of classic works on

medieval and modern numismatic were included in Kolbe/Spink New York sales. His Russian library was sold by James Elman in 2001. He died January 21, 2004, at age 90.

**87. Sanford J. Durst** graduated from Polytechnic Institute of New York. He practiced as an attorney and was publisher of numismatic books. His reprints of numismatic classics were known for low production values. He served as vice president for the Foundation for Numismatic Education. Last known to be living in Howard Beach, New York. [Born 1933]

**88. Leonard H. Finn** was a resident of West Roxbury, Massachusetts, and president of the Collectors Club of Boston. He was an authority on early American coins, paper money and Betts medals. He offered numismatic books through ads in *The Numismatist* and died on March 23, 1994, at age 76.

**89. David Gladfelter** graduated from Rutgers University Law School and practiced in New Jersey. He contributed articles and book reviews to *The Asylum*. He is an award-winning swimmer in his age group over 80.

**90. Leonard H. Hartmann** is a dealer in philatelic books as Philatelic Bibliopole operating in Louisville, Kentucky, [pbbooks.com](http://pbbooks.com) He wrote, "When it first started with *The Asylum* I subscribed as I thought the early philatelic and numismatic literature would have a common ground but at least for me it did not seem to do so and I did not renew. Yes, indeed there is some common but I have not continued this direction as the subject just doesn't connect. My personal interest in the early philatelic literature is mostly related for the forgers and they do not seem to get into the numismatic."

**91. (Dr.) Russell Hibbs** was a physician and resident of Henderson, Kentucky. He was a sixty year ANA member in 2014. Kolbe and Fanning sold selections from his library in 2012. The Russell A. Hibbs Memorial Library at Columbia University is named for someone else. [Born 1933]

**92. David Hirt** was a resident of Frederick, Maryland. He served in the U.S. Army and then worked as an Army civilian employee for 38 years until retirement in 1997. He served as NBS Secretary/Treasurer 1996 to 2001 and on the board 2001 to 2003. His library includes about 7000 books and catalogs. He remains an active member in 2019.

**93. David P. McBride** graduated from Georgetown University and worked for the Summit County Schools of Frisco, Colorado, for 33 years. He wrote a book on duck stamps published in 1984 but had no numismatic publications after 1979. He was not on the 1985 membership list. He died on June 6, 2013, at age 65.

**94. William B. McKechnie III** was a resident of Honolulu, Hawaii, and later Cross City, Florida. His grandfather was a baseball manager and member of the baseball Hall of Fame. WRM III delivered the game winning hit to win the 1954 Class A National Knothole League Baseball Championship. He died on June 17, 2006, at age 66.

**95. Richard Margolis** was a coin dealer in Teaneck, New Jersey, specializing in eighteenth century world medals. He was a founder of the New York International Numismatic Convention. In 2010 he won the Thomas H. Law Award for First Time Exhibitors at the ANA. Author of *Benjamin Franklin in Terra Cotta*. He died on November 24, 2018, at age 87.

**96. Marc L. Merrick** attended the San Diego School of Law and worked as a depu-

ty district attorney for Los Angeles County. He is living in Long Beach in 2019.

**97. Emil N. Eusonio** was owner of the San Fernando Book Company with a retail store for numismatic books at the Book Faire in Sylmar, California. [Born 1925]

**98. Charles F. Sullivan** was a resident of Silver Spring, Maryland, when he placed an ad in *The Asylum* in 1981. His name did not appear on the member list in 1985.

**99. Reinhold Jordan** was a history teacher in Schweinfurt, West Germany. He assembled a collection of medals related to Schweinfurt that he sold to the city. He had an interest in numismatic bookplates and wrote about them for *The Asylum*.

**100. Morten Eske Mortensen** is a resident of Copenhagen, Denmark. He is a publisher of numismatic books and dealer in numismatic books specializing in the Scandinavian countries. In 2013 he narrowly escaped being crushed by falling bookshelves.

About the author: I was aware of the Numismatic Bibliomania Society as it was being organized and attended the 1980 ANA in Cincinnati and the presentation by John J. Ford. I wrote to Jack Collins to inquire about membership but he was slow with his response. My initial membership date was April 1, 1983, just three months too late to be a charter member.



COIN WORLD, Wednesday, September 21, 1983

## Brown shares collection with Bibliomaniacs

Dr. Kirby W. Brown who collects numismatic books with embossed coin books on a slide commentary, supplementing it with a display of volumes. One of his goals, he told the audience of Bibliomaniacs, is to add to a bibliography of titles of embossed coin books. He said his favorite book in the ANA course earlier in the day, an embossed book he had "never seen before, never heard of, never knew it existed."

"There are two major sources of pleasure in a collecting hobby," Dr. Brown said. "One is the collecting acquisition, the hunt, the research on the particular thing in which you are interested. That's what you do as a collector, people do."

Describing his specialized book collecting research as "little corner of Bibliomania," Dr. Brown traced his collection of embossed coin books on a slide commentary, supplementing it with a display of volumes. One of his goals, he told the audience of Bibliomaniacs, is to add to a bibliography of titles of embossed coin books. He said his favorite book in the ANA course earlier in the day, an embossed book he had "never seen before, never heard of, never knew it existed."

"I think today I learned the true meaning of the mania part of Bibliomania," Dr. Brown said.

"I wasn't planning on making any purchases today. But when I looked at this book a bit closer in the dealer's case, a little book among other things, my heart jumped into my throat."

Dr. Brown traced books that contained illustrations as real "they are the closest you can come to the feel of and appearance of the real thing," direct die impressions, stamping die made from electrolytes of coins, uncolored metal foil shells, metal disks, to engravings to the recent slick color illustrated auction catalogues.

Listeners and editions of the books and how they were produced have led Dr. Brown to what he described as an "interesting angle" as he told his audience of the manufacturers and the cost of some of the books in his collection.

He closed his lecture with a slide of another collection, European cigarette cards, post cards, business cards. He opened his slide presentation with a cigar box label, a gift from Rayne Bourne, Numismatic Bibliomania Society leader.

Bourne was to share the program with Dr. Brown because she was presenting a program during the same meeting.

Carling Gresham opened the session with a discussion on computerization as it applies to the hobby, sharing his experience as he works on a Latin American bibliography which he hopes to complete in the next two or three years with the aid of a computer.

Later the discussion expanded as members considered the impact of microfiche on the dissemination of information contained in books and publications, whether it will destroy the value of books.

Mixed emotions seemed to be the consensus, ease of access of information to more people by means of microfiche and microfiche was applauded, yet one member said, "no romance, there is no feel of the volume, its size, its smell..."

In the exploding software market, it is necessary to chose hardware and software in this day of change, Harry W. Bass, president of the American Numismatic Society, told the Bibliomaniacs.

"Things have turned around now, it used to be that one needed to do the work on the software and then get the machine and the hardware. Software is just exploding. With respect to the hardware, the big unit cost, make certain you are buying something that the software writers out across America are writing programs for in their basement rooms," Bass said.

He predicted there would be only three or four dominant hardware companies in the near future, maybe fewer.

"Choose very carefully when you buy your computer hardware unit," Bass warned.

One member said, "As printing becomes a lost art, books will become valuable as books, rather than for information. I think we have to be prepared to convert to microfiche, we have to be prepared for it, and expect to be dragged, kicking and screaming into this information age where you are not going to be able to read something. You are going to have to print it out on the video screen, and if you want a hard copy, you are going to 'dump' it out on your printer."

Carling Gresham, information explosion with the move from the hammer and chisel to the typewriter, another member said, "I don't think we are going to lose the value of books. There are always a bunch of us around like us who want real books!"

Bass, a prominent numismatic book collector, told his fellow collectors he believes, "We are all in this to disseminate information, to spread the gospel, to generate interest, to philosophize as a book dealer."

Bass cited the potential of the ANS library in New York City for the numismatic researcher. "One of my frustrations has



Dr. Kirby Brown, left, is congratulated for his embossed coin book slide presentation by fellow bibliophile Harry W. Bass Jr., American Numismatic Society president.

been that the holdings are so vast, yet so precious, that it can't function as a lending library. Right now we are in the process of computerizing our coins and our library. It is one of my hopes to get it on microfiche one of these days, so much the current holdings are so valuable and are truly rare, irreplaceable and require a trip to New York City to see."

"It won't happen tomorrow, however," Bass added.

During the business session of the society, members heard that John J. Ford Jr., one of its most prominent members, had been hospitalized following a heart attack.

At year's end, the society will have a new communications director. The Atalay, four issues a year under the editorship of Jack Collins was promised. Members are urged to submit features, editorials and photographs. Dave Lange submitted a prototype design for membership cards.

Dues in the society are \$7.50. Membership applications with cash should go to Mrs. Linda Kolbe, P.O. Box 1990A, Crestline, Calif.

Cal Wilson, left, presided over the San Diego meeting of the Numismatic Bibliomania Society. Here he inspects an exhibit of rare embossed coin books with Carling Gresham who discussed the age of the computer and computerization during the program.

# My NBS Experience (So Far)

By Dave Steine

I began collecting numismatic books in the late '90s. At the time I was working on a set of high grade New Orleans gold coins. Participating in the Harry Bass, Jr. auction sales I soon learned of Harry's great love of numismatic literature. With inspired curiosity the first sale of numismatic books that I participated in was George Kolbe's final Bass sale. From that moment on I was hooked and soon the history of the hobby meant as much or more than the coins themselves.

Owning books and catalogues that were once in the library of one of the luminaries of the hobby became a passion. A few years later I attended the John Ford, Jr. sale in person and became a member of the NBS. For more than a decade I enjoyed reading my copies of *The Asylum* and Wayne's World on the web. Although truly enjoyable I was lacking one thing: I had never attended one of the yearly meetings or networked with others.

In 2018 I decided it was time to change that and I attended the 2018 meeting at the annual ANA convention. WOW—everyone was so welcoming and gracious I wish I would have started participating years sooner. For everyone out there, who like me is just hanging in the wings, I highly recommend getting out to the annual meetings. The camaraderie and time spent with your fellow bibliomaniacs will add to your enjoyment of the hobby, it surely has for me.

Hope to see all of you in Chicago!



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# The Top 100 and the NBS Wiki

By Tom Wetter

My foray into the NBS began back in 2008 with a conversation with Wayne Homren where I offered my assistance documenting the results of the “The One Hundred Greatest Items Of United States Numismatic Literature” survey on the Wiki. At the time, the extent of my library was only to support my collecting focus. That very quickly fell to the wayside as I obtained missing items to complete documenting the Top 100. As I began to understand the rarity of some of the titles, it piqued my interest much more than coins and as our Wiki documents books in original state, locating some items in true original state revealed to me how truly rare some of the titles are, regardless of state. Extensive assistance with the Wiki from Mark Borckardt, Bryce Brown, Charlie Davis, David and Maria Fanning, George Kolbe, and Michael Sullivan pushed me into ‘bibliomania’ status and titles from all aspects of numismatics now grace my shelves.

Regarding our NBS Wiki, and with the Newman portal allowing a much wider audience to be exposed to numismatic literature than ever before, our Wiki is the only source that documents original bindings and editions for each listing and complements the works by Adams, Davis, and Gengerke. Visit the NBS Wiki for your research or to add your information at [coinbooks.org](http://coinbooks.org).



Tom Wetter's numismatic library

# Am I a Bibliomaniac?

By Ray Williams

Before talking about my NBS experience and the importance of numismatic literature to me, the reader should know a little about me. I'm a retired electronic technician who is fortunate to be married to a wife (Diane) who is very tolerant of my hobby involvement and obsessions. I collect, study and write about the coins, paper money and medals related to our pre-federal period. In writing, I have developed a deep appreciation for editors—the unsung heroes of our hobby. Although I have a certain level of expertise regarding New Jersey coppers, I possess a general knowledge of the other topics I place in print. Following the advice of Clint Eastwood, "A man's got to know his limitations," I often ask friends (experts) to review my drafts before submitting them. Not being a professional writer, I am a prime example of anyone being able to share hobby fun/knowledge because of awesome editors.

Am I a bibliomaniac? I'm not sure. I have a working reference library that has taken over my house. Diane tells me that I couldn't possibly read all of these books in my lifetime. I told her they're reference books and I don't need to read them all, they just need to be available when needed. But there's more than a working library as I do have some rare and collectible books. As an example, I have an original Crosby *Early Coins of America* (1875) and a Quarterman reprint from the 1980s. The Quarterman issue is used for research and there are no hesitations to write notes on the pages. Then there is the original 1875 book. I don't use it for research, but there is a level of enjoyment to take it off the bookshelf on a snowy evening, fire up a fresh pot of coffee and relax in my recliner. There's a special feel of the binding, a smell of time as I open the cover, the beautiful original plates and the feeling as though I've met the author.

There are many NBS members that have made my hobby so much fun for decades before even becoming a member, and ever since. Through articles in *The Asylum* and attending several NBS meetings, I've been encouraged, assisted and inspired to an even greater level of hobby enjoyment. Members have instilled in me a desire to go beyond some of the standard works. I now search contemporary documents and read non-numismatic books about the history of the colonial time periods and geographical areas. And it is my desire to share what I learn with others. I hope that what I find interesting, others will, too.

What a great hobby this is, and what wonderful people are a part of it! I hope that when someone reads this issue of *The Asylum* one hundred years from now, they will know how well we worked together and encouraged each other in numismatic pursuits. Congratulations and thank you to all the officers and volunteers, past and present, who have brought NBS to where we are on this 40th anniversary.



# Congratulations, NBS!

By John and Nancy Wilson

It is an honor and a privilege to be a member of such an outstanding organization for so many years. Though we haven't attended NBS meetings at the WFOM in a few years, we can recall one meeting that was spectacular.

Some of the old-time members might recall the meeting that featured noted California dealer Abe Kosoff. His talk consisted of his attempt to donate the fabulous Eli Lilly collection to the Smithsonian for a tax write-off for the family. He talked about the fabulous gold coin rarities in the collection and how valuable they were. He made a very strong point in saying that if the family didn't get the tax write-off, he would get the largest commission ever if he sold the collection by auction. When we were in Washington some years back we were able to view the Lilly collection that was on display at the Smithsonian. We nicknamed the Lilly display "all that glitters." Unfortunately, the exhibit was taken down quite a few years ago.

We congratulate the NBS on reaching this milestone and wish them many more years of great success.



"Invasion of Pittsburgh" in 2004. Left to Right: Nancy Wilson; Joel J. Orosz; E. Tomlinson Fort; P. Scott Rubin; David Fanning; Phil Carrigan; Pete Smith.



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### NBS Symposium, Thursday, August 15th at 1:00

Gilles Bransbourg, ANS Deputy Director

Len Augsburger on the first six issues of *The Numismatist*

### NBS General Meeting and Benefit Auction,

Friday, August 16th at 11:30

Len Augsburger, Newman Numismatic Portal

Wayne Homren, *The E-Sylum*

*The Asylum* Awards ceremony

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